

● A YOUNG PUFFIN ●

Poems to delight, thrill, intrigue and,  
above all, tickle your fancy

With everything from skyscrapers to Guy Fawkes, ducks on a pond to rosebuds, and pirates to man-eating alligators, Sara and Stephen Corrin, so well known for their collections of stories for children, have put the spontaneous relish back into young children's poetry with this delicious selection of poems young children will really enjoy.



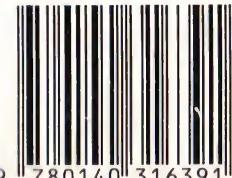
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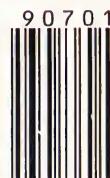
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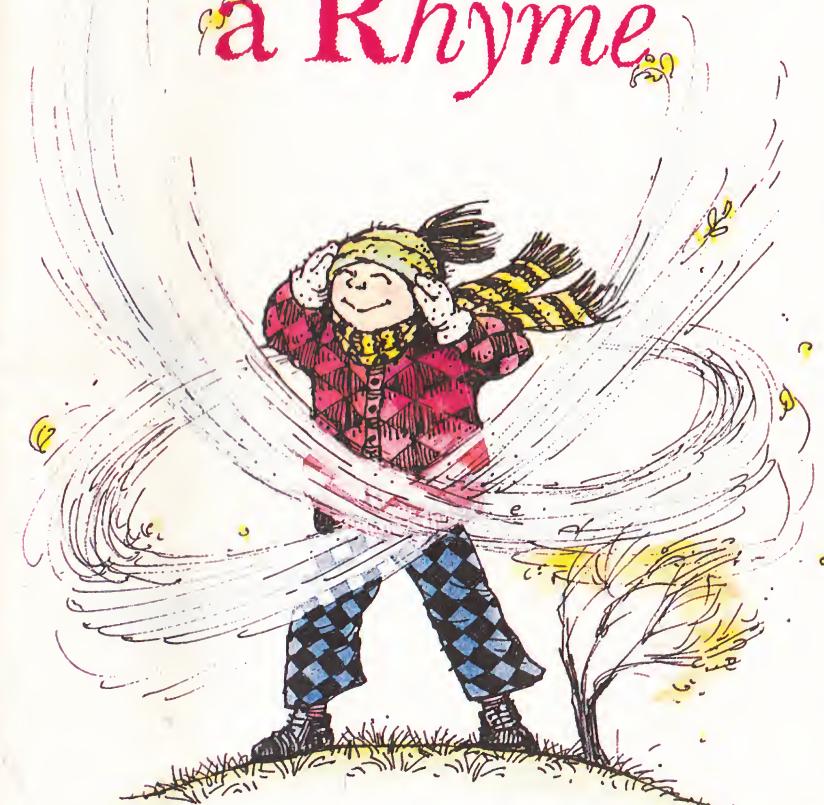


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● A YOUNG PUFFIN ●

# Once Upon a Rhyme



*101 Poems for Young Children*

Edited by  
Sara and Stephen Corrin



POETRY

PUFFIN BOOKS  
ONCE UPON A RHYME

At last, at last, at last! For years very young children have developed a natural relish for verse through an abundance of lively and beautifully illustrated books of nursery rhymes and jingles, only to have their enjoyment killed a year or two later by solemn unappealing books of starchy old-fashioned verse.

Not any longer! It is like escaping from a desert to an oasis to discover this enticing new book of poems Sara and Stephen Corrin have collected to interest and entertain today's new young readers.

Any child who has this book will be happy with it, because it presents such a kaleidoscope of subjects and moods, from the peaceful contemplation of ducks on a pond or how a blind child would imagine colours, to the hectic whizz and whirl of Guy Fawkes' night or the ecstasy of a spaceman in flight. Old favourites like Hiawatha and the Quangle Wangle rub shoulders with Mervyn Peake's Uncle Paul who plays the piano 'upside down, in his delightful dressing-gown', and if *they* are not exciting enough, how about other characters like Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee, who 'was wicked as wicked could be', or menacing P. Cornelius Alligator, the elevator operator (lift man to you!) whose passengers always disappear on their way to the nineteenth floor?

Eleanor Farjeon, Spike Milligan, Christina Rossetti, Ted Hughes, Ogden Nash, Walter de la Mare – all are represented, and all appear at their best in this lively anthology, sympathetically and entertainingly illustrated by Jill Bennett with numerous line drawings.

*For Tom*

PUFFIN BOOKS

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## *Introduction*

No child has been reared without the songs, lullabies and rhymes of babyhood. Infants respond to their dancing rhythms and melodic patterns as naturally as they imbibe milk from the breast. Why, then, cut them off from this musical enjoyment of language just at the point when their picture of life is widening and when language is becoming their main medium, becoming ever richer as a tool of communication and interpretation – at a time when everything around them is felt and seen with growing intensity? Children *do* take to verse. They love it.

We talk of seeing things with a child's sense of wonder. The poems we have collected in *Once Upon a Rhyme* tell of these strange and wonderful things and the emotions they evoke. They tell of odd and funny things around us, the riddles and puzzles which give rise to those entrancing quizzical expressions on the innocent face of the child, the earnest 'why' questions which, sadly, are short-lived in all but the sharp and inquiring mind.

The poet feels with the intensity of the child and the child perhaps sees with a poet's inward eye but lacks the power to play the god with words. On my visits to schools I [Sara] have seen and heard children's warm responses to these dancing verses, have joined in and shared their eager delight.

The poems in our collection will, we hope, delight the adult reader as well as the child listener, and many are short enough for the child to read and read again for himself.

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**PUFFING ALONG  
AND  
SHOOTING UP**

## *The Train to Glasgow*

Here is the train to Glasgow.  
Here is the driver,  
Mr MacIver,  
Who drove the train to Glasgow.  
Here is the guard from Donibristle  
Who waved his flag and blew his whistle  
To tell the driver,  
Mr MacIver,  
To start the train to Glasgow.



Here is a boy called Donald MacBrain  
Who came to the station to catch the train  
But saw the guard from Donibristle  
Wave his flag and blow his whistle  
To tell the driver,  
Mr MacIver,  
To start the train to Glasgow.

Here is the guard, a kindly man  
Who, at the last moment, hauled into the van  
That fortunate boy called Donald MacBrain  
Who came to the station to catch the train  
But saw the guard from Donibristle  
Wave his flag and blow his whistle  
To tell the driver,  
Mr MacIver,  
To start the train to Glasgow.



Here are hens and here are cocks,  
Clucking and crowing inside a box,  
In charge of the guard, that kindly man  
Who, at the last moment, hauled into the van  
That fortunate boy called Donald MacBrain  
Who came to the station to catch the train  
But saw the guard from Donibristle  
Wave his flag and blow his whistle  
To tell the driver,  
Mr MacIver,  
To start the train to Glasgow.

Here is the train. It gave a jolt  
Which loosened a catch and loosened a bolt,  
And let out the hens and let out the cocks,  
Clucking and crowing out of their box,  
In charge of the guard, that kindly man  
Who, at the last moment, hauled into the van  
That fortunate boy called Donald MacBrain  
Who came to the station to catch the train  
But saw the guard from Donibristle  
Wave his flag and blow his whistle  
To tell the driver,  
Mr MacIver,  
To start the train to Glasgow.

The guard chased a hen and, missing it, fell.  
The hens were all squawking, the cocks were as well,  
And unless you were there you haven't a notion  
Of the flurry, the fuss, the noise and commotion  
Caused by the train which gave a jolt  
And loosened a catch and loosened a bolt  
And let out the hens and let out the cocks,  
Clucking and crowing out of their box,

In charge of the guard, that kindly man  
Who, at the last moment, hauled into the van  
That fortunate boy called Donald MacBrain  
Who came to the station to catch the train  
But saw the guard from Donibristle  
Wave his flag and blow his whistle  
To tell the driver,  
Mr MacIver,  
To start the train to Glasgow.



Now Donald was quick and Donald was neat  
And Donald was nimble on his feet.  
He caught the hens and he caught the cocks  
And he put them back in their big box.  
The guard was pleased as pleased could be  
And invited Donald to come to tea  
On Saturday, at Donibristle,  
And let him blow his lovely whistle  
And said in all his life he'd never  
Seen a boy so quick and clever,  
And so did the driver,  
Mr MacIver  
Who drove the train to Glasgow.

WILMA HORSBURGH

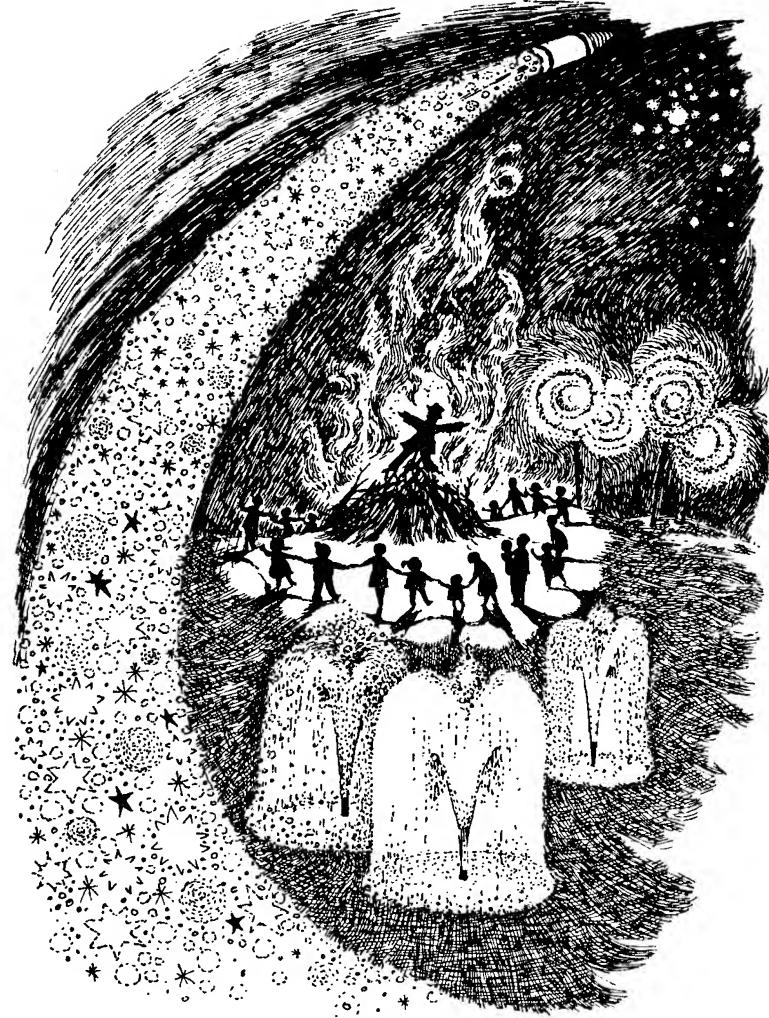
## *November the Fifth*

And you, big rocket,  
I watch how madly you fly  
Into the smoky sky  
With flaming tail;  
Hear your thin wail.

Catherine wheel  
I see how fiercely you spin  
Round and round on your pin;  
How I admire  
Your circle of fire.

Roman candle,  
I watch how prettily you spark  
Stars in the autumn dark  
Falling like rain  
To shoot up again.

And you, old guy,  
I see how sadly you blaze on  
Till every scrap is gone;  
Burnt into ashes  
Your skeleton crashes.



And so,  
The happy ending of the fun,  
Fireworks over, bonfire done;  
Must wait a year now to remember  
Another fifth of November.

## *Building a Skyscraper*

They're building a skyscraper  
Near our street,  
Its height will be nearly  
One thousand feet.

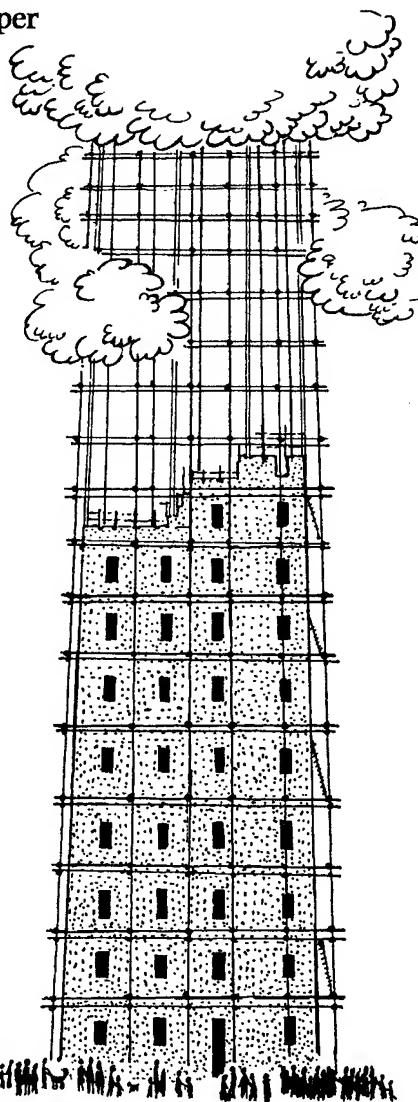
It covers completely  
A city block.  
They drilled its foundation  
Through solid rock.

They made its framework  
Of great steel beams  
With riveted joints  
And welded seams.

A swarm of workmen  
Strain and strive,  
Like busy bees  
In a honeyed hive.

Building the skyscraper  
Into the air  
While crowds of people  
Stand and stare.

Higher and higher  
The tall towers rise  
Like Jacob's ladder  
Into the skies.



JAMES S. TIPPETT

## *Fireworks*

They rise like sudden fiery flowers  
That burst upon the night,  
They fall to earth in burning showers  
Of crimson, blue, and white.

Like buds too wonderful to name,  
Each miracle unfolds,  
And catherine-wheels begin to flame  
Like whirling marigolds.

Rockets and Roman candles make  
An orchard of the sky,  
Whence magic trees their petals shake  
Upon each gazing eye.

JAMES REEVES

## *Soft Landings*

Space-man, space-man,  
Blasting off the ground  
With a wake of flame behind you,  
Swifter than passing sound.

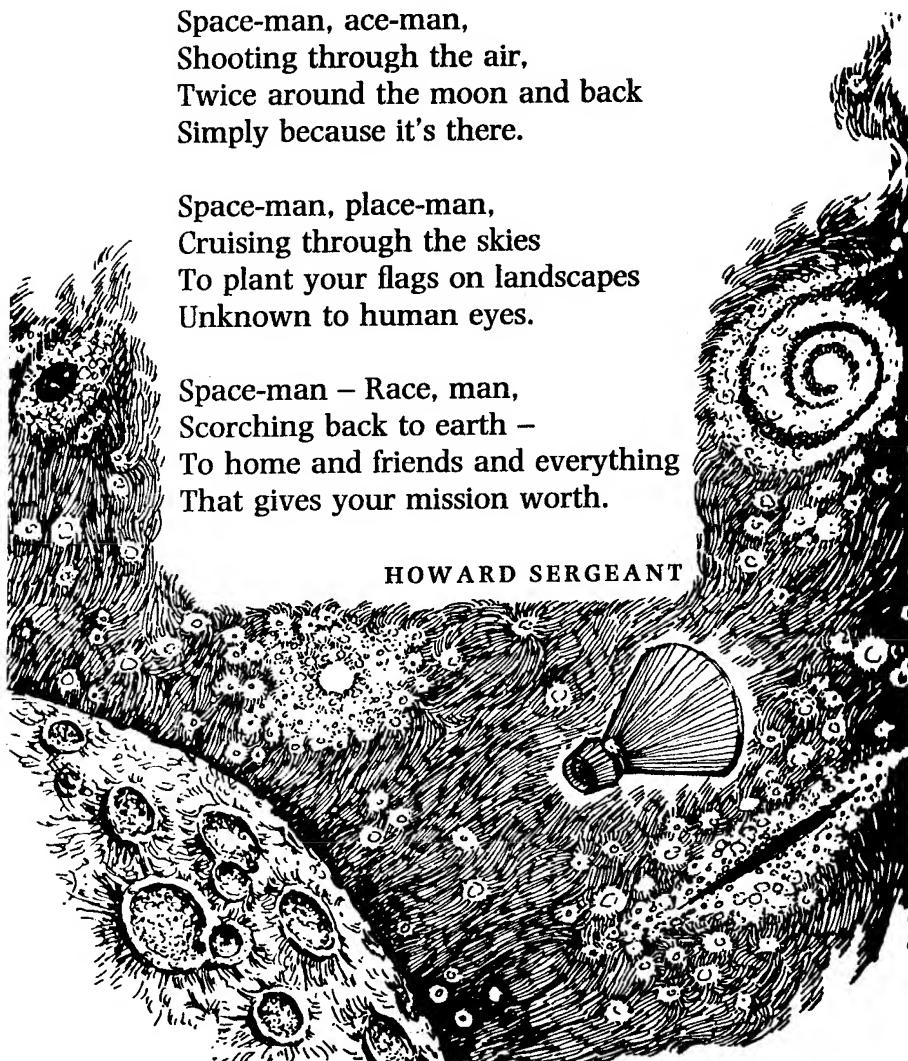
Space-man, ace-man,  
Shooting through the air,  
Twice around the moon and back  
Simply because it's there.

Space-man, place-man,  
Cruising through the skies  
To plant your flags on landscapes  
Unknown to human eyes.

Space-man – Race, man,  
Scorching back to earth –  
To home and friends and everything  
That gives your mission worth.

HOWARD SERGEANT

## **VIEWPOINTS**



## *If I Were King*

I often wish I were a King,  
And then I could do anything.

If only I were King of Spain,  
I'd take my hat off in the rain.

If only I were King of France,  
I wouldn't brush my hair for aunts.

I think, if I were King of Greece,  
I'd push things off the mantelpiece.

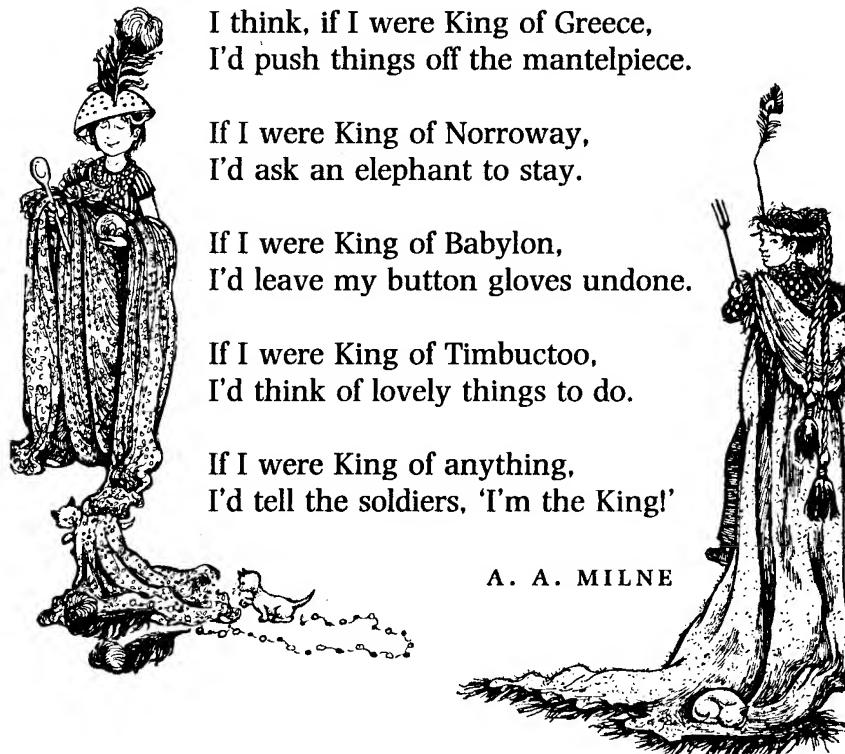
If I were King of Norroway,  
I'd ask an elephant to stay.

If I were King of Babylon,  
I'd leave my button gloves undone.

If I were King of Timbuctoo,  
I'd think of lovely things to do.

If I were King of anything,  
I'd tell the soldiers, 'I'm the King!'

A. A. MILNE



## *The Blind Men and the Elephant*

It was six men of Indostan,  
To learning much inclined,  
Who went to see the Elephant  
(Though all of them were blind),  
That each by observation  
Might satisfy his mind.

The First approached the Elephant,  
And happening to fall  
Against his broad and sturdy side,  
At once began to bawl:  
'God bless me! but the Elephant  
Is very like a wall!'

The Second, feeling of the tusk,  
Cried: 'Ho! what have we here  
So very round and smooth and sharp?  
To me 'tis mighty clear  
This wonder of an Elephant  
Is very like a spear!'

The Third approached the animal,  
And, happening to take  
The squirming trunk within his hands,  
Thus boldly up and spake:  
'I see,' quoth he, 'the Elephant  
Is very like a snake!'

The Fourth reached out his eager hand,  
And felt about the knee:  
'What most this wondrous beast is like  
Is mighty plain,' quoth he;  
'Tis clear enough the Elephant  
Is very like a tree!'

The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,  
Said: 'E'en the blindest man  
Can tell what this resembles most;  
Deny the fact who can,  
This marvel of an Elephant  
Is very like a fan!'

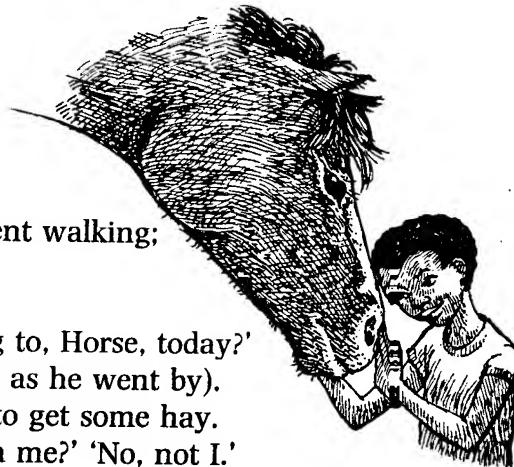
The Sixth no sooner had begun  
About the beast to grope,  
Than, seizing on the swinging tail  
That fell within his scope,  
'I see,' quoth he, 'the Elephant  
Is very like a rope!'

And so these men of Indostan  
Disputed loud and long,  
Each in his own opinion  
Exceeding stiff and strong,  
Though each was partly in the right  
And all were in the wrong!

JOHN GODFREY SAXE

## Puppy and I

I met a Man as I went walking;  
We got talking,  
Man and I.  
'Where are you going to, Man?' I said  
(I said to the Man as he went by).  
'Down to the village, to get some bread.  
Will you come with me?' 'No, not I.'



I met a Horse as I went walking;  
We got talking,  
Horse and I.  
'Where are you going to, Horse, today?'  
(I said to the Horse as he went by).  
'Down to the village to get some hay.  
Will you come with me?' 'No, not I.'

I met a Woman as I went walking;  
We got talking,  
Woman and I.  
'Where are you going to, Woman, so early?'  
(I said to the Woman as she went by).  
'Down to the village to get some barley.  
Will you come with me?' 'No, not I.'

I met some Rabbits as I went walking;  
We got talking,  
Rabbits and I.

'Where are you going in your brown fur coats?'  
(I said to the Rabbits as they went by).  
'Down to the village to get some oats.  
Will you come with us?' 'No, not I.'



I met a Puppy as I went walking;  
We got talking,  
Puppy and I.  
'Where are you going this nice fine day?'  
(I said to the Puppy as he went by).  
'Up to the hills to roll and play.  
I'll come with you, Puppy,' said I.

A. A. MILNE

## *I Don't Like You*

If I were the Prime Minister of Britain  
And you were a snail  
I'd be most careful walking round my garden  
Not to disturb your trail.

If I were a snail and you were the Prime Minister  
It wouldn't be like that.  
You'd tramp around in your expensive boots  
And squash me flat.

KIT WRIGHT

## *I asked the little boy who cannot see*

I asked the little boy who cannot see,  
'And what is colour like?'  
'Why, green,' said he,  
'Is like the rustle when the wind blows through  
The forest; running water, that is blue;  
And red is like a trumpet sound; and pink  
Is like the smell of roses; and I think  
That purple must be like a thunderstorm;  
And yellow is like something soft and warm;  
And white is a pleasant stillness when you lie  
And dream.'

ANON.

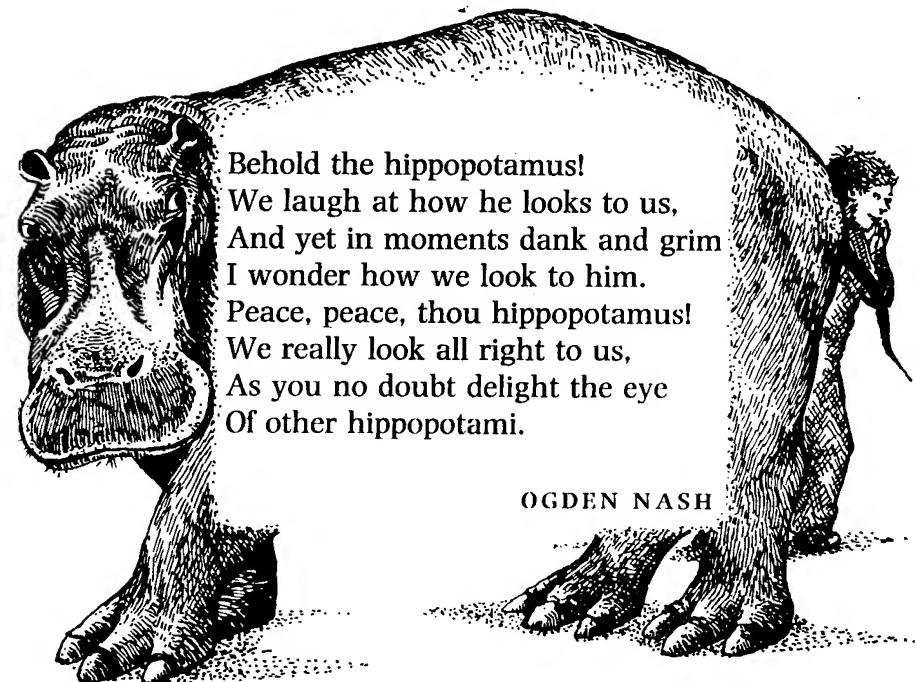
## *A Baby Sardine*

A baby sardine  
Saw her first submarine:  
She was scared and watched through a peephole.

'Oh come, come, come,'  
Said the sardine's mum,  
'It's only a tin full of people.'

SPIKE MILLIGAN

## *The Hippopotamus*



Behold the hippopotamus!  
We laugh at how he looks to us,  
And yet in moments dank and grim  
I wonder how we look to him.  
Peace, peace, thou hippopotamus!  
We really look all right to us,  
As you no doubt delight the eye  
Of other hippopotami.

OGDEN NASH

## *Horrible Things*

'What's the horriest thing you've seen?'  
Said Nell to Jean.

'Some grey-coloured, trodden-on plasticine;  
On a plate, a left-over cold baked bean;  
A cloakroom-ticket numbered thirteen;  
A slice of meat without any lean;  
The smile of a spiteful fairy-tale queen;  
A thing in the sea like a brown submarine;  
A cheese fur-coated in brilliant green;  
A bluebottle perched on a piece of sardine.'

'What's the horriest thing *you've* seen?'  
Said Jean to Nell.

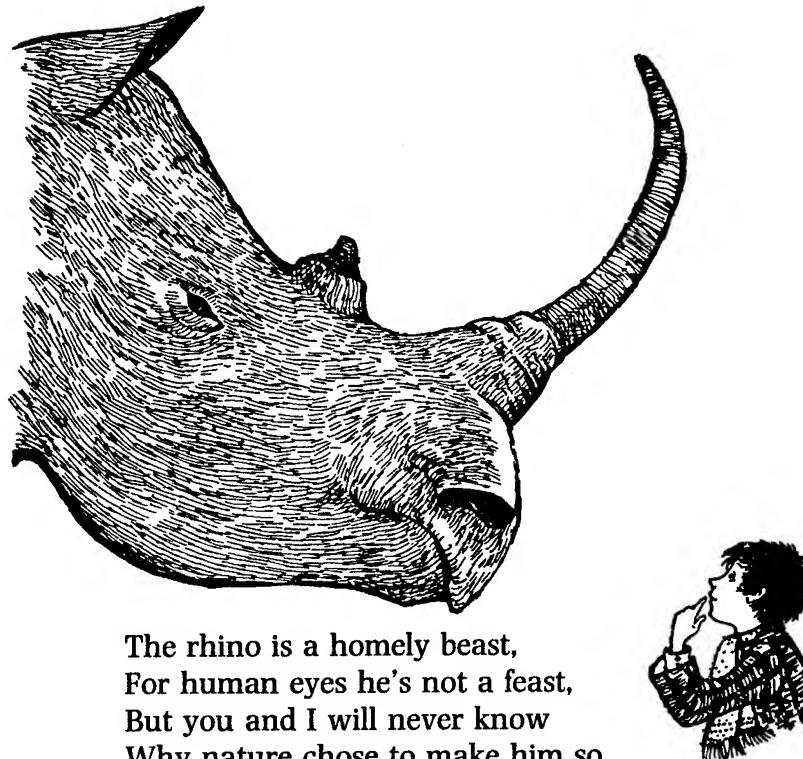
'Your face, as you tell  
Of all the horriest things *you've* seen.'

## CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL

ROY FULLER

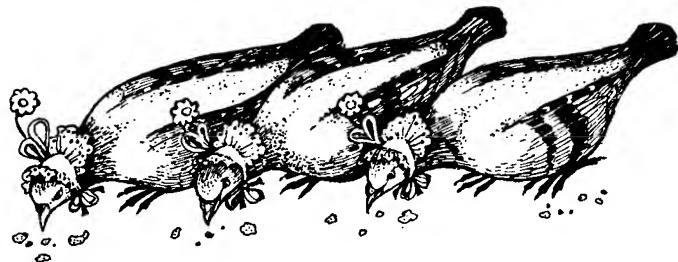


## *The Rhinoceros*



The rhino is a homely beast,  
For human eyes he's not a feast,  
But you and I will never know  
Why nature chose to make him so.  
Farewell, farewell, you old rhinoceros,  
I'll stare at something less preposterous.

OGDEN NASH



## *Mrs Peck Pigeon*

Mrs Peck Pigeon  
Is pecking for bread;  
Bob, bob, bob,  
Goes her little round head.

Tame as a pussy cat  
In the street  
Step, step, step,  
Go her little red feet.

With her little red feet  
And her little round head  
Mrs Peck Pigeon  
Goes pecking for bread.

ELEANOR FARJEON



## *Elephant*

It is quite unfair to be  
obliged to be so large, so I suppose  
you could call me discontented.

Think big, they said, when  
I was a little elephant; they  
wanted me to get used to it.

It was kind. But it doesn't help if,  
inside, you are carefree in small ways,  
fond of little amusements.

You are smaller than me, think  
how conveniently near the flowers are,  
how you can pat the cat by just

halfbending over. You can also  
arrange teacups for dolls, play  
marbles in the proper season.

I would give anything to be  
able to do a tiny, airy, flitting  
dance to show how very little a

thing happiness can be really.

ALAN BROWNJOHN

## *The Butterfly's Ball*

Come take up your hats, and away let us haste,  
To the Butterfly's Ball, and the Grasshopper's Feast.  
The trumpeter Gadfly has summoned the crew,  
And the revels are now only waiting for you.

On the smooth-shaven grass by the side of a wood,  
Beneath the broad oak which for ages has stood,  
See the children of earth and the tenants of air,  
For an evening's amusement together repair.

And there came the Beetle, so blind and so black,  
Who carried the Emmet, his friend, on his back.  
And there came the Gnat, and the Dragonfly too,  
And all their relations, green, orange, and blue.

And there came the Moth, with her plumage of down,  
And the Hornet, with jacket of yellow and brown;  
Who with him the Wasp, his companion, did bring,  
But they promised, that evening, to lay by their sting.

Then the sly little Dormouse crept out of his hole,  
And led to the feast his blind cousin the Mole.  
And the Snail, with his horns peeping out of his shell,  
Came, fatigued with the distance, the length of an ell.

A mushroom their table, and on it was laid  
A water-dock leaf, which a tablecloth made.  
The viands were various, to each of their taste,  
And the Bee brought the honey to sweeten the feast.

With steps most majestic the Snail did advance,  
And he promised the gazers a minuet to dance;  
But they all laughed so loud that he drew in his head,  
And went in his own little chamber to bed.

Then, as evening gave way to the shadows of night,  
Their watchman, the Glow-worm, came out with his  
light.

So home let us hasten, while yet we can see;  
For no watchman is waiting for you and for me.

WILLIAM ROSCOE



## *I Caught a Fish*

I caught a little fish one day –  
A baby fish, I think.  
It made me jump, I heard it say,  
‘I want another drink.’  
I didn’t know a fish could speak –  
That’s why I jumped, you see.  
It spoke in just a tiny squeak,  
Not loud like you and me.  
‘You want a drink? You greedy fish,  
‘You’ve had enough, I know.  
‘I’ll put you on my Mummy’s dish  
‘With salt to make you grow.’  
‘You’d better not,’ replied the fish,  
‘My dad’s a great big whale,  
‘And if you put me on a dish  
‘He’ll kill you with his tail.’  
I’m not afraid of whales, I’m not;  
I’d eat one for my tea,  
But I was angry with the tot,  
So threw it in the sea.  
The little fish was full of joy,  
It gave its head a nod,  
‘Good-bye,’ it squeaked, ‘you silly boy,  
‘My Daddy’s just a cod.’

BERTRAM MURRAY

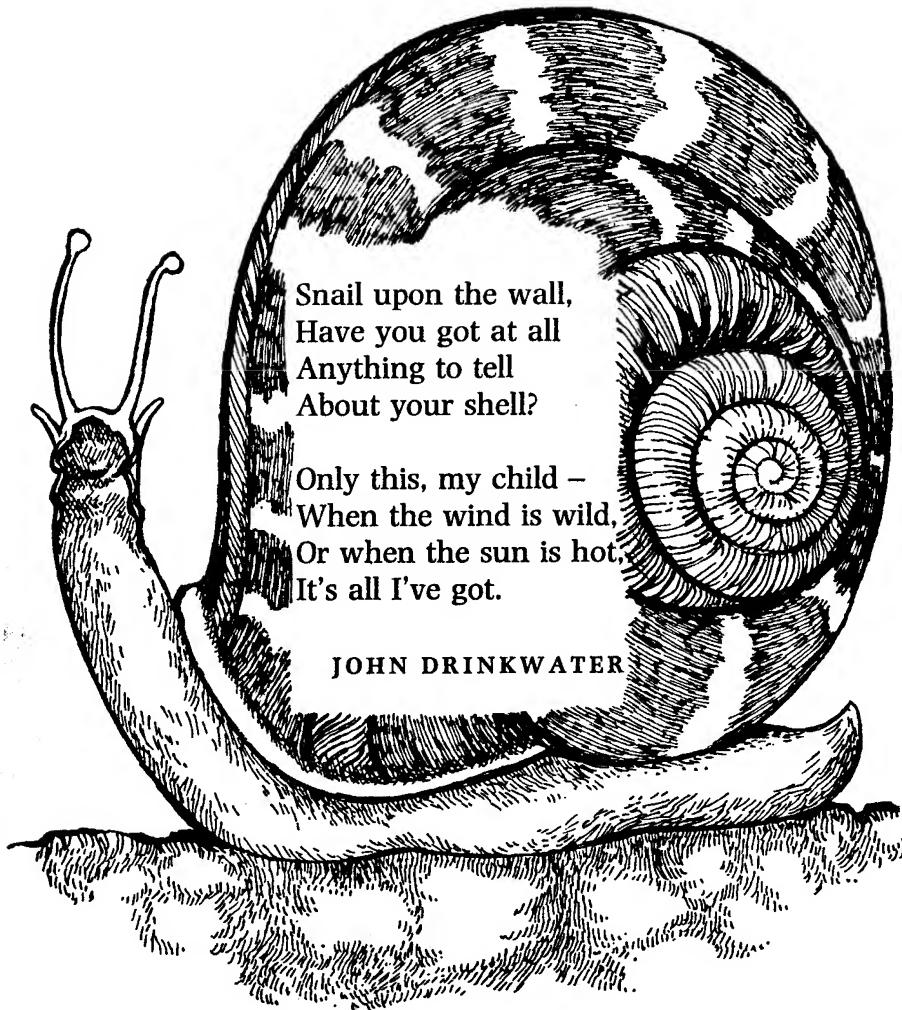
## *The Fly*

How large unto the tiny fly  
Must little things appear! –  
A rosebud like a featherbed,  
Its prickle like a spear;  
A dewdrop like a looking-glass,  
A hair like golden wire;  
The smallest grain of mustard-seed  
As fierce as coals of fire;  
A loaf of bread, a lofty hill;  
A wasp, a cruel leopard;  
And specks of salt as bright to see  
As lambkins to a shepherd.

WALTER DE LA MARE

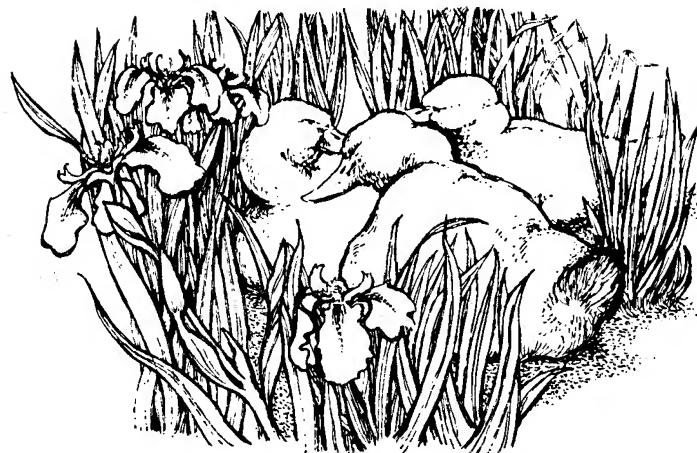


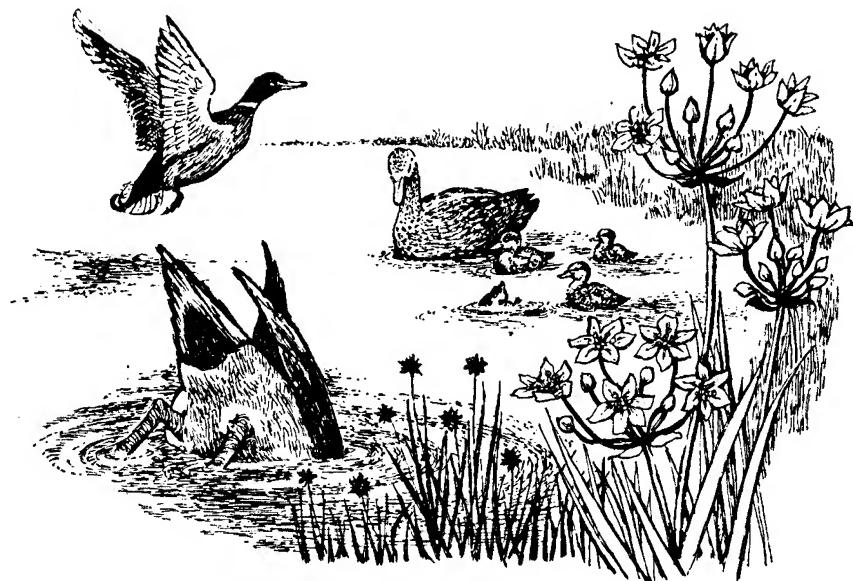
## *The Snail*



## *Ducks*

From troubles of the world  
I turn to ducks,  
Beautiful comical things  
Sleeping or curled  
Their heads beneath white wings  
By water cool,  
Or finding curious things  
To eat in various mucks  
Beneath the pool,  
Tails uppermost, or waddling  
Sailor-like on the shores  
Of ponds, or paddling  
– Left! right! – with fanlike feet  
Which are steady oars  
When they (white galleys) float  
Each bird a boat  
Rippling at will the sweet  
Wide waterway . . .



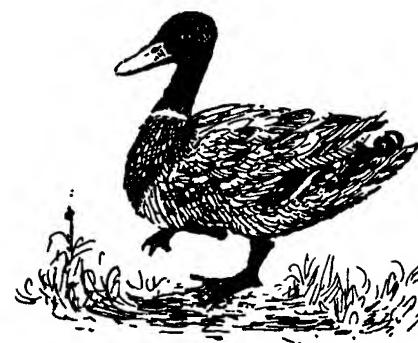


Yes, ducks are valiant things  
On nests of twigs and straws,  
And ducks are soothy things  
And lovely on the lake  
When that the sunlight draws  
Thereon their pictures dim  
In colours cool.  
And when beneath the pool  
They dabble, and when they swim  
And make their rippling rings,  
O ducks are beautiful things!

But ducks are comical things:—  
As comical as you.  
Quack!  
They waddle round, they do.

They eat all sorts of things,  
And then they quack.  
By barn and stable and stack  
They wander at their will,  
But if you go too near  
They look at you through black  
Small topaz-tinted eyes  
And wish you ill.  
Triangular and clear  
They leave their curious track  
In mud at the water's edge,  
And there amid the sedge  
And slime they gobble and peer  
Saying 'Quack! Quack!' . . .

FREDERICK WILLIAM HARVEY



## *The Little Hiawatha*

Then the little Hiawatha  
Learned of every bird its language,  
Learned their names and all their secrets;  
How they built their nests in Summer,  
Where they hid themselves in Winter,  
Talked with them whene'er he met them,  
Called them 'Hiawatha's Chickens'.

Of all beasts he learned the language,  
Learned their names and all their secrets,  
How the beavers built their lodges,  
How the squirrels hid their acorns,  
How the reindeer ran so swiftly,  
Why the rabbit was so timid;  
Talked with them whene'er he met them,  
Called them 'Hiawatha's Brothers'.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW  
from *The Song of Hiawatha*



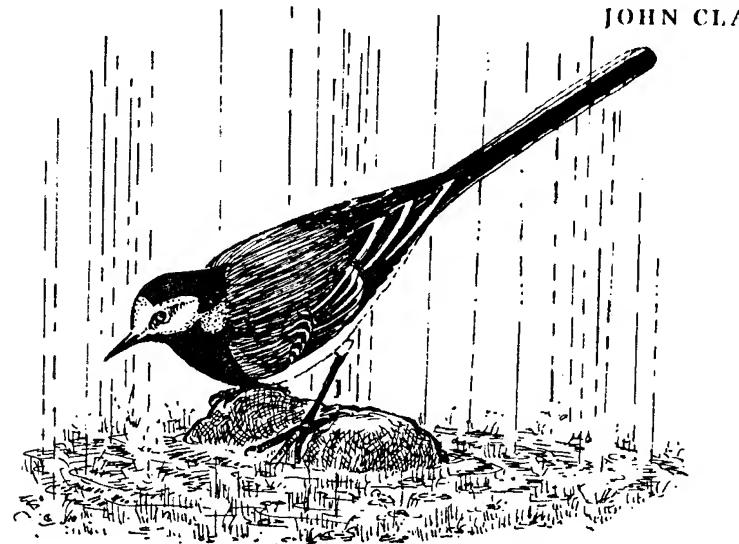
## *Little Trotty Wagtail*

Little trotty wagtail, he went in the rain,  
And tittering tottering sideways, he near got straight  
again,  
He stooped to get a worm, and look'd up to catch a fly,  
And then he flew away ere his feathers were dry.

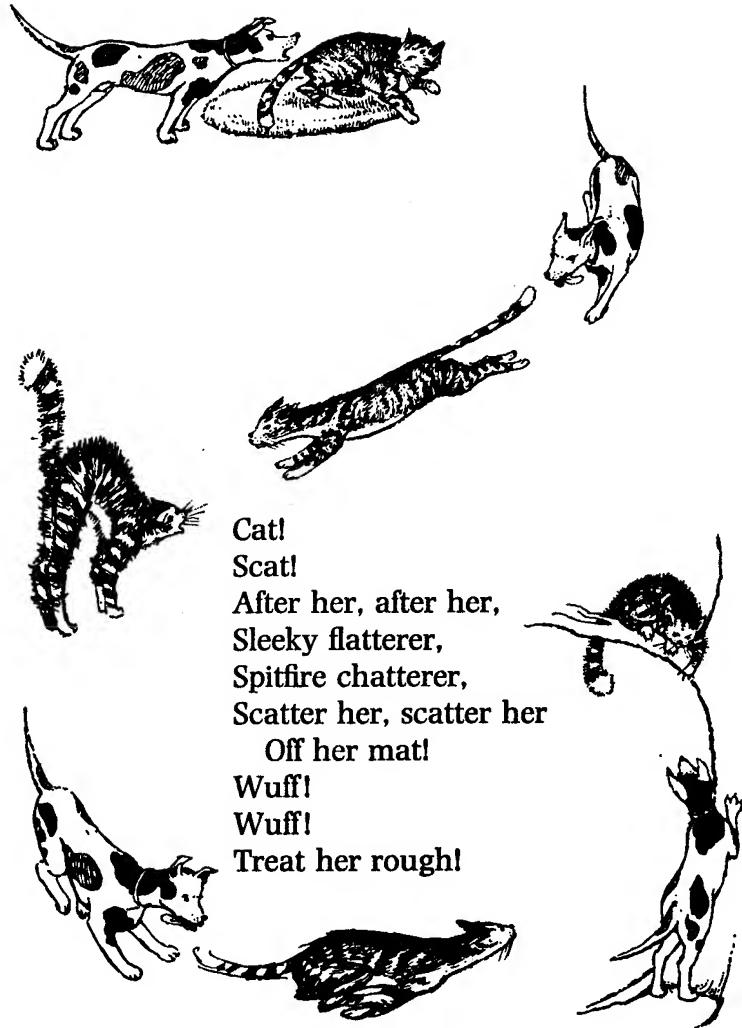
Little trotty wagtail, he waddled in the mud,  
And left his little footmarks, trample where he would,  
He waddled in the water-pudge, and waggle went his  
tail,  
And chirruped up his wings to dry upon the garden rail.

Little trotty wagtail, you nimble all about,  
And in the dimpling water-pudge you waddle in and out,  
Your home is nigh at hand, and in the warm pigsty,  
So, little Master Wagtail, I'll bid you a good-bye.

JOHN CLARE



*Cat!*



Cat!  
Scat!  
After her, after her,  
Sleeky flatterer,  
Spitfire chatterer,  
Scatter her, scatter her  
Off her mat!  
Wuff!  
Wuff!  
Treat her rough!

Git her, git her,  
Whiskery spitter!  
Catch her, catch her,  
Green-eyed scratcher!  
Slathery  
Slithery  
Hisser,  
Don't miss her!  
Run till you're dithery,  
Hithery  
Thithery  
Pftts! pftts!  
How she spits!  
Spitch! Spatch  
Can't she scratch!  
Scratching the bark  
Of the sycamore-tree  
She's reaching her ark  
And's hissing at me  
Pftts! Pftts!  
Wuff! wuff!  
Scat,  
Cat!  
That's  
That!

ELEANOR FARJEON

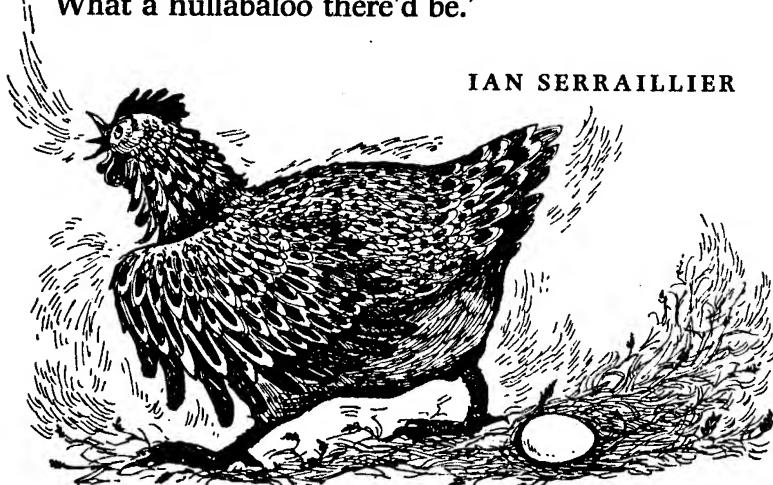
## *The Hen and the Carp*

Once, in a roostery,  
there lived a speckled hen, and when –  
ever she laid an egg this hen  
ecstatically cried:  
'O progeny miraculous, particular spectaculous,  
what a wonderful hen am I!'

Down in a pond nearby  
perchance a fat and broody carp  
was basking, but her ears were sharp –  
she heard Dame Cackle cry:  
'O progeny miraculous, particular spectaculous,  
what a wonderful hen am I!'

'Ah, Cackle,' bubbled she,  
'for your single egg, O silly one,  
I lay at least a million;  
suppose for each I cried:  
"O progeny miraculous, particular spectaculous!"  
What a hullabaloo there'd be.'

## WIND AND WEATHER



IAN SERRAILLIER

*Something told the wild geese*

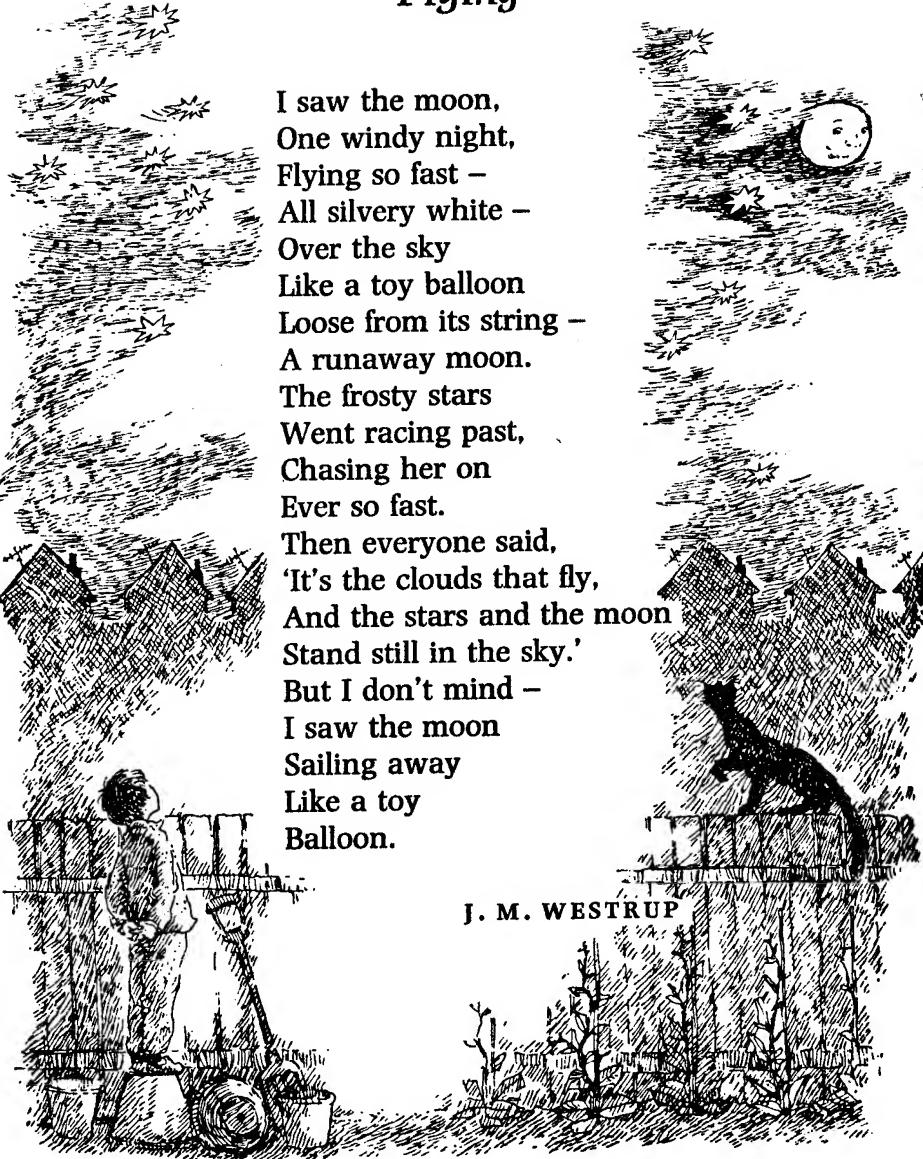
Something told the wild geese  
It was time to go.

Though the fields lay golden  
Something whispered – 'Snow'.  
Leaves were green and stirring.  
Berries, lustre-glossed,  
But beneath warm feathers  
Something cautioned – 'Frost'.

All the sagging orchards  
Steamed with amber spice,  
But each wild beast stiffened  
At remembered ice.  
Something told the wild geese  
It was time to fly –  
Summer sun was on their wings,  
Winter in their cry.

RACHEL FIELD

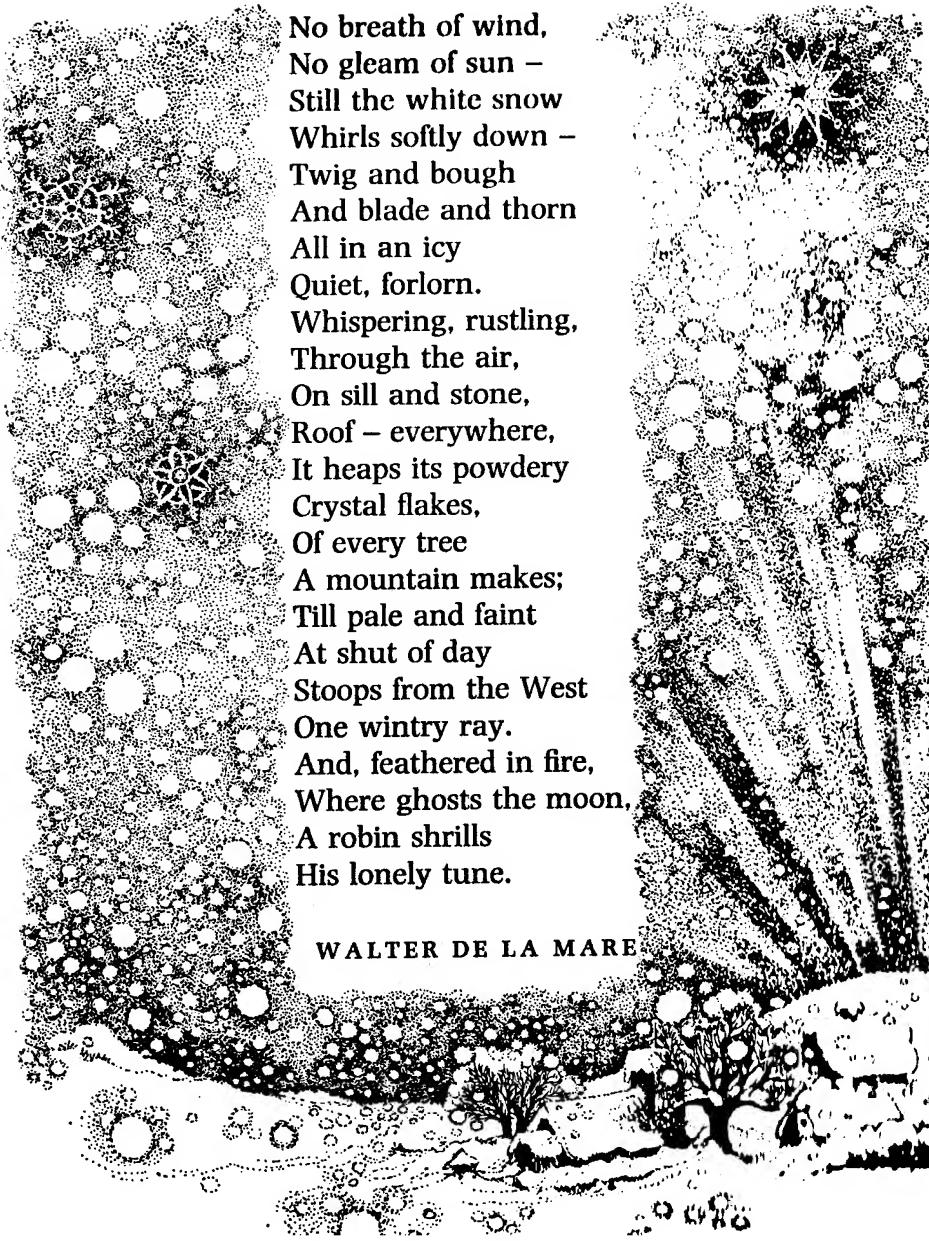
## *Flying*



I saw the moon,  
One windy night,  
Flying so fast –  
All silvery white –  
Over the sky  
Like a toy balloon  
Loose from its string –  
A runaway moon.  
The frosty stars  
Went racing past,  
Chasing her on  
Ever so fast.  
Then everyone said,  
'It's the clouds that fly,  
And the stars and the moon  
Stand still in the sky.'  
But I don't mind –  
I saw the moon  
Sailing away  
Like a toy  
Balloon.

J. M. WESTRUP

## *Snow*



No breath of wind,  
No gleam of sun –  
Still the white snow  
Whirls softly down –  
Twig and bough  
And blade and thorn  
All in an icy  
Quiet, forlorn.  
Whispering, rustling,  
Through the air,  
On sill and stone,  
Roof – everywhere,  
It heaps its powdery  
Crystal flakes,  
Of every tree  
A mountain makes;  
Till pale and faint  
At shut of day  
Stoops from the West  
One wintry ray.  
And, feathered in fire,  
Where ghosts the moon,  
A robin shrills  
His lonely tune.

WALTER DE LA MARE

## *The north wind doth blow*

The north wind doth blow,  
And we shall have snow,  
And what will the robin do then, poor thing?  
    He'll sit in a barn,  
    And keep himself warm,  
And hide his head under his wing, poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,  
And we shall have snow,  
And what will the swallow do then, poor thing?  
    Oh, do you not know  
    That he's off long ago  
To a country where he'll find spring, poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,  
And we shall have snow,  
And what will the dormouse do then, poor thing?  
    Roll'd up like a ball,  
    In his nest snug and small,  
He'll sleep till warm weather comes in, poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,  
And we shall have snow,  
And what will the honey-bee do then, poor thing?  
    In his hive he will stay  
    Till the cold is away,  
And then he'll come out in the spring, poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,  
And we shall have snow,  
And what will the children do then, poor things?  
    When lessons are done,  
    They must skip, jump and run,  
Until they have made themselves warm, poor things!

ANON.

## *The Wind*

What can be the matter  
With Mr Wind today?  
He calls for me so loudly,  
Through the key-hole, 'Come and play.'

I'll put my warm red jacket on  
And pull my hat on tight,  
He'll never get it off, although  
He tries with all his might.

I'll stand so firm upon my legs,  
I'm strong, what do I care?  
Now, Mr Wind, just come along  
And blow me if you dare.

DOROTHY GRADON



## *Spring*



Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king,  
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,  
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing –  
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay.  
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,  
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay –  
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,  
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,  
In every street these tunes our ears do greet –  
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!  
Spring, the sweet Spring!

THOMAS NASHE

## *A Boy's Song*

Where the pools are bright and deep,  
Where the grey trout lies asleep,  
Up the river and over the lea,  
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,  
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,  
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,  
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,  
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,  
There to track the homeward bee,  
That's the way for Billy and me.

JAMES HOGG



## *A Dragonfly*

When the heat of the summer  
Made drowsy the land,  
A dragonfly came  
And sat on my hand.

With its blue jointed body,  
And wings like spun glass,  
It lit on my fingers  
As though they were grass.

ELEANOR FARJEON

## *Ladybird! Ladybird!*



Ladybird! Ladybird! Fly away home,  
Night is approaching, and sunset is come:  
The herons are flown to their trees by the Hall;  
Felt, but unseen, the damp dewdrops fall.  
This is the close of a still summer day;  
Ladybird! Ladybird! hastel fly away!

EMILY BRONTE

## *What is Pink?*

What is pink? A rose is pink  
By the fountain's brink.  
What is red? A poppy's red  
In its barley bed.  
What is blue? The sky is blue  
Where the clouds float through.  
What is white? A swan is white  
Sailing in the light.  
What is yellow? Pears are yellow  
Rich and ripe and mellow.  
What is green? The grass is green,  
With small flowers between.  
What is violet? Clouds are violet  
In the summer twilight.  
What is orange? Why, an orange,  
Just an orange!

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

## *The Intruder*

Two-boots in the forest walks,  
Pushing through the bracken stalks.  
Vanishing like a puff of smoke,  
Nimbletail flies up the oak.

Longears helter-skelter shoots  
Into his house among the roots.  
At work upon the highest bark,  
Tapperbill knocks off to hark.

Painted-wings through sun and shade  
Flounces off along the glade.  
Not a creature lingers by,  
When clumping Two-boots comes to pry.

JAMES REEVES

## *Beech Leaves*

In autumn down the beechwood path  
The leaves lie thick upon the ground.  
It's there I love to kick my way  
And hear their crisp and crashing sound.

I am a giant, and my steps  
Echo and thunder to the sky.  
How the small creatures of the woods  
Must quake and cower as I pass by!

This brave and merry noise I make  
In summer also when I stride  
Down to the shining, pebbly sea  
And kick the frothing waves aside.

JAMES REEVES

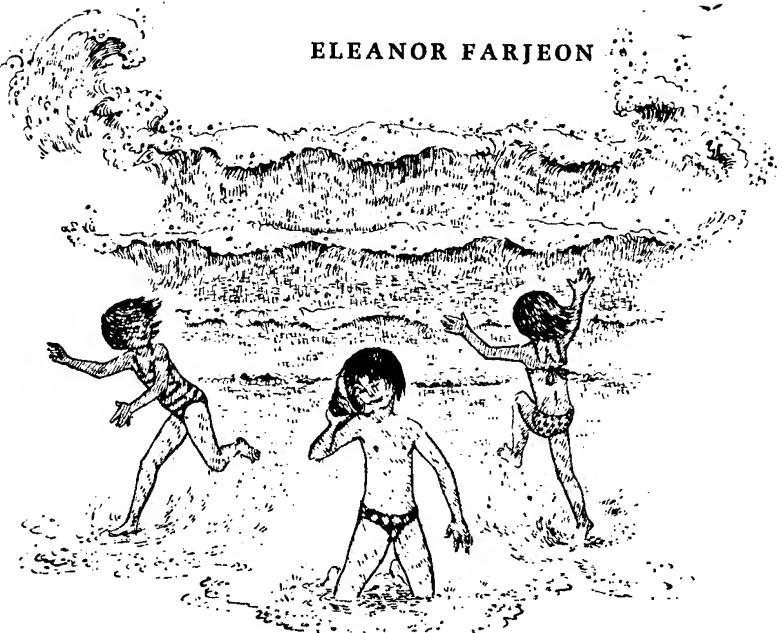
## *There are big waves*

There are big waves and little waves,  
Green waves and blue,  
Waves you can jump over,  
Waves you dive through.

Waves that rise up  
Like a great water wall,  
Waves that swell softly  
And don't break at all.

Waves that can whisper,  
Waves that can roar,  
And tiny waves that run at you  
Running on the shore.

ELEANOR FARJEON



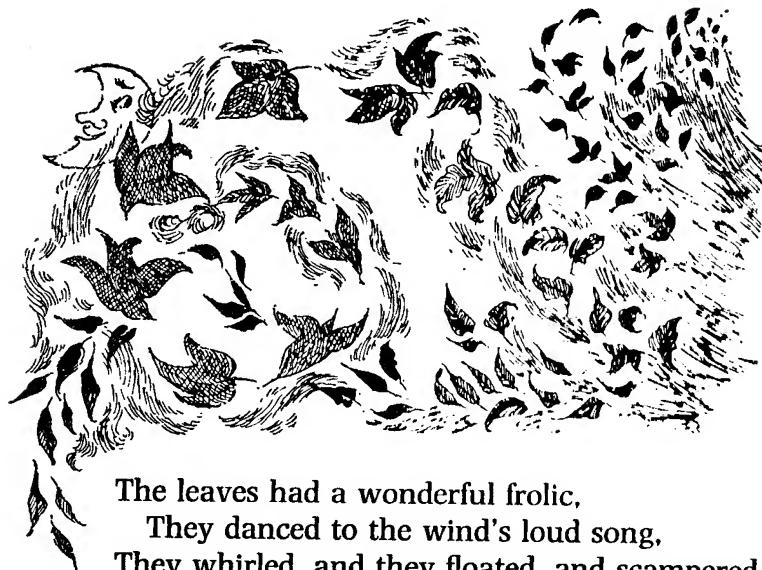
## *Stocking and Shirt*

Stocking and shirt  
Can trip and prance,  
Though nobody's in them  
To make them dance.  
See how they waltz  
Or minuet,  
Watch the petticoat  
Pirouette.  
This is the dance  
Of stocking and shirt,  
When the wind puts on  
The white lace skirt.  
Old clothes and young  
clothes  
Dance together,  
Twirling and whirling  
In mad March weather.  
'Come!' cries the wind,  
To stocking and shirt.  
'Away!' cries the wind  
To blouse and skirt.

Then clothes and wind  
All pull together,  
Tugging like mad  
In the mad March  
weather.  
Across the garden  
They suddenly fly  
And over the far hedge  
High, high, high!  
'Stop!' cries the housewife  
But all too late,  
Her clothes have passed  
The furthest gate.  
They are gone forever  
In the bright blue sky,  
And only the  
handkerchiefs  
Wave good-bye.

JAMES REEVES

## *The Leaves in a Frolic*



The leaves had a wonderful frolic,  
They danced to the wind's loud song,  
They whirled, and they floated, and scampered,  
They circled and flew along.

The moon saw the little leaves dancing,  
Each looked like a small brown bird.  
The man in the moon smiled and listened,  
And this is the song he heard.

The North Wind is calling, is calling,  
And we must whirl round and round,  
And when our dancing is ended  
We'll make a warm quilt for the ground.

ANON.

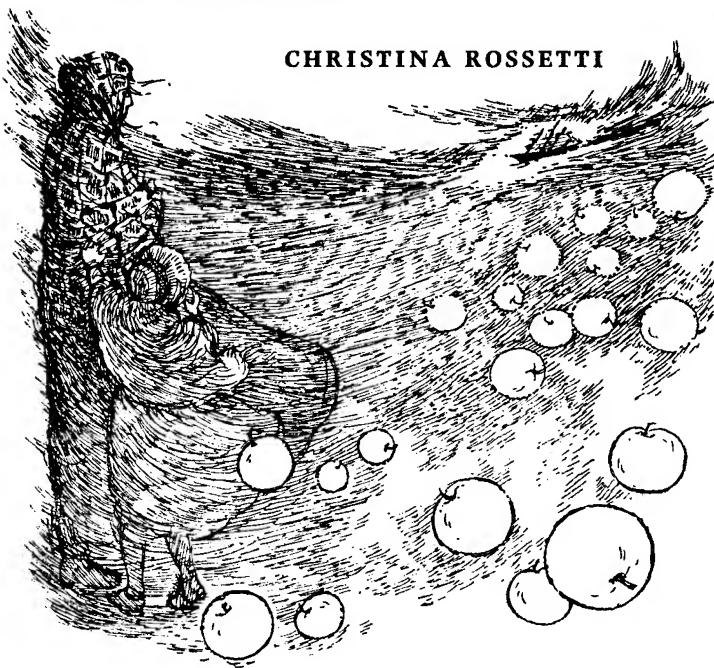
## Check

### *The Sound of the Wind*

The wind has such a rainy sound  
Moaning through the town,  
The sea has such a windy sound –  
Will the ships go down?

The apples in the orchard  
Tumble from their tree –  
Oh will the ships go down, go down,  
On the windy sea?

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI



The Night was creeping on the ground!  
She crept, and did not make a sound

Until she reached the tree: And then  
She covered it, and stole again

Along the grass beside the wall!  
– I heard the rustling of her shawl

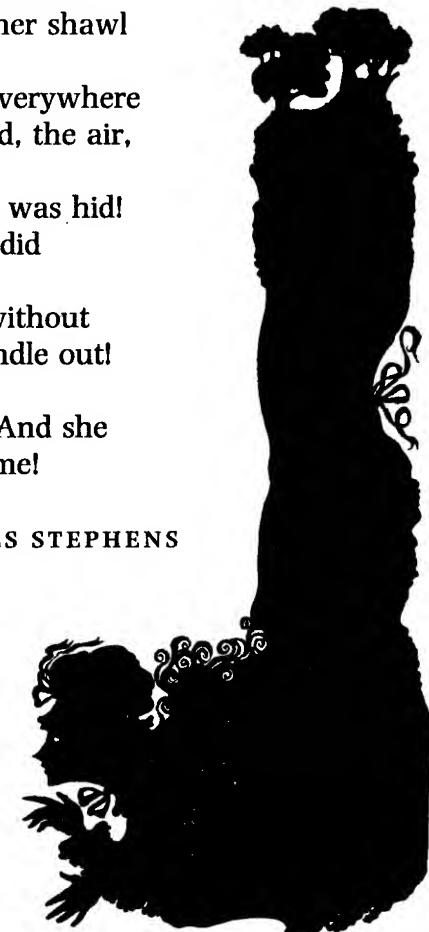
As she threw blackness everywhere  
Along the sky, the ground, the air,

And in the room where I was hid!  
But, no matter what she did

To everything that was without  
She could not put my candle out!

So I stared at the Night! And she  
Stared back solemnly at me!

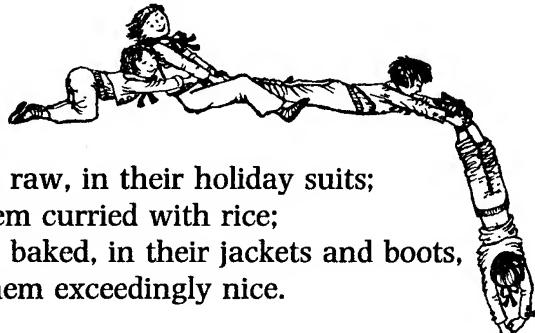
JAMES STEPHENS



## ODD AND FUNNY

## *The Sleepy Giant*

My age is three hundred and seventy-two,  
And I think, with the deepest regret,  
How I used to pick up and voraciously chew  
The dear little boys whom I met.

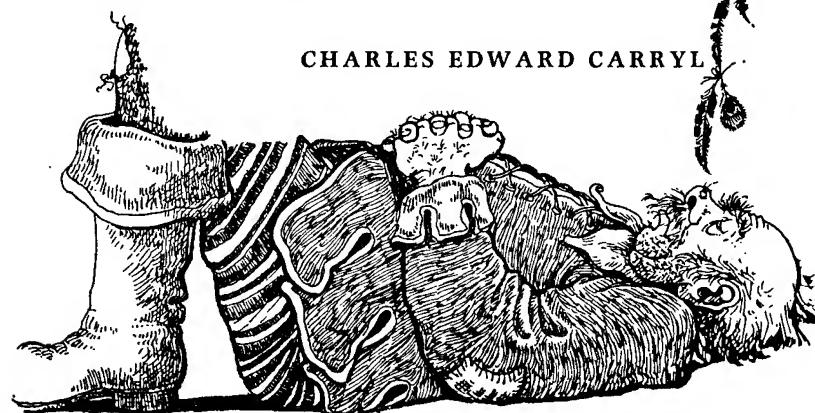


I've eaten them raw, in their holiday suits;  
I've eaten them curried with rice;  
I've eaten them baked, in their jackets and boots,  
And found them exceedingly nice.

But now that my jaws are too weak for such fare,  
I think it exceedingly rude  
To do such a thing, when I'm quite well aware  
Little boys do not like to be chewed.

And so I contentedly live upon eels,  
And try to do nothing amiss,  
And I pass all the time I can spare from my meals  
In innocent slumber – like this.

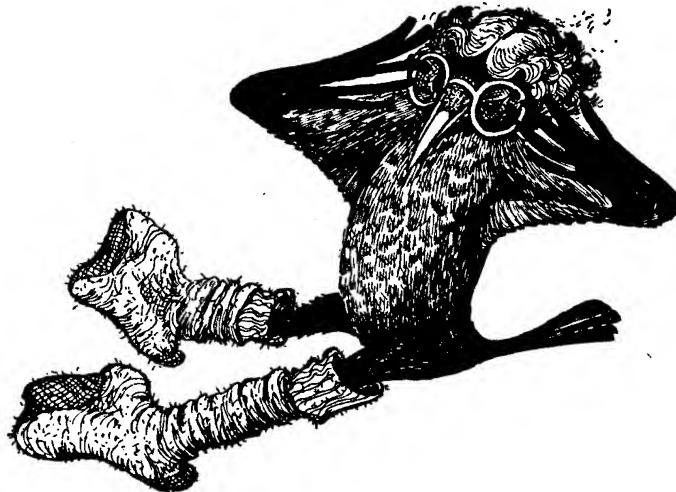
CHARLES EDWARD CARRYL



## *My Sister Jane*

And I say nothing – no, not a word  
About our Jane. Haven't you heard?  
She's a bird, a bird, a bird, a bird.  
Oh it never would do to let folks know  
My sister's nothing but a great big crow.

Each day (we daren't send her to school)  
She pulls on stockings of thick blue wool  
To make her pin crow legs look right,  
Then fits a wig of curls on tight,  
And dark spectacles – a huge pair  
To cover her very crowy stare.  
Oh it never would do to let folks know  
My sister's nothing but a great big crow.



When visitors come she sits upright  
(With her wings and her tail tucked out of sight).  
They think her queer but extremely polite.  
Then when the visitors have gone  
She whips out her wings and with her wig on  
Whirls through the house at the height of your head –  
Duck, duck, or she'll knock you dead.  
Oh it never would do to let folks know  
My sister's nothing but a great big crow.

At meals whatever she sees she'll stab it –  
Because she's a crow and that's a crow's habit.  
My mother says 'Jane! Your manners! Please!'  
Then she'll sit quietly on the cheese,  
Or play the piano nicely by dancing on the keys –  
Oh it never would do to let folks know  
My sister's nothing but a great big crow.

TED HUGHES

## *Between Birthdays*

My birthdays take so long to start.  
They come along a year apart.  
It's worse than waiting for a bus;  
I fear I used to fret and fuss,  
But now, when by impatience vexed  
Between one birthday and the next,  
I think of all that I have seen  
That keeps on happening in between.  
The songs I've heard, the things I've done,  
Make my unbirthdays not so un-

OGDEN NASH

## *Look at all those monkeys*

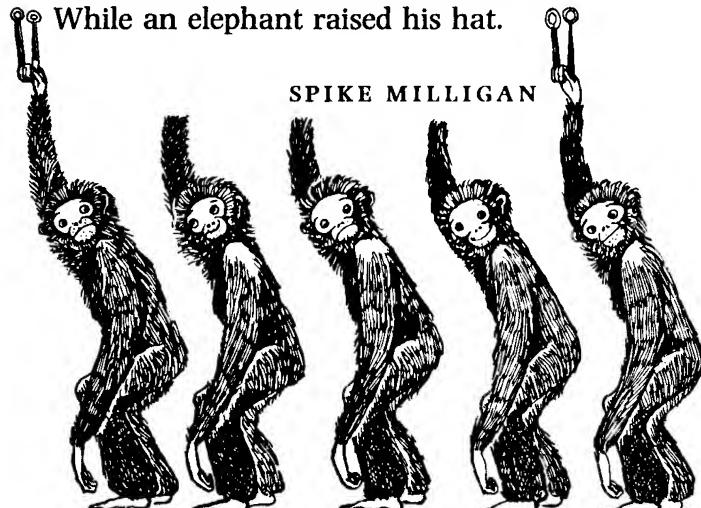
Look at all those monkeys  
Jumping in their cage.  
Why don't they all go out to work  
And earn a decent wage?

*How can you say such silly things,  
And you a son of mine?  
Imagine monkeys travelling on  
The Morden-Edgware line!*

But what about the Pekinese!  
They have an allocation.  
'Don't travel during Peke hour,'  
It says on every station.

*My Gosh, you're right, my clever boy,  
I never thought of that!  
And so they left the monkey house,  
While an elephant raised his hat.*

SPIKE MILLIGAN



## *Maggie*

There was a small maiden named Maggie,  
Whose dog was enormous and shaggy;  
The front end of him  
Looked vicious and grim –  
But the tail end was friendly and waggy.



## *Meetings and Absences*

How does your little toe  
In the bed so long and bare,  
Keep on discovering  
The top sheet's little tear?

ROY FULLER

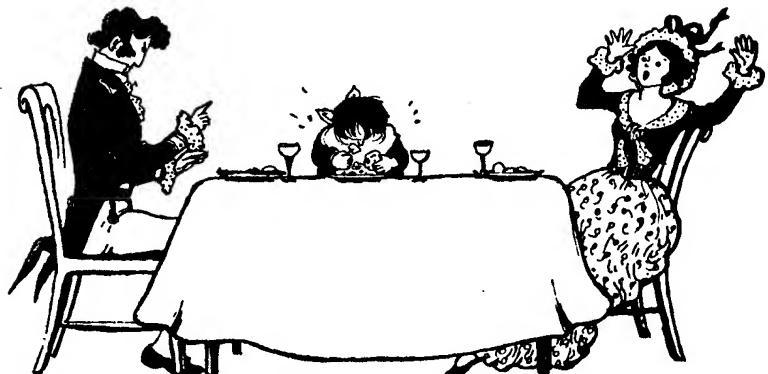
## *The Visitor*

John's manners at the table  
Were very sad to see.  
You'd scarce believe a child could act  
In such a way as he.

He smacked his lips and gobbled,  
His nose down in his plate.  
You might have thought that he was starved,  
So greedily he ate.

He'd snatch for what he wanted,  
And never once say 'please',  
Or, elbows on the table,  
He'd sit and take his ease.

In vain papa reproved him;  
In vain mamma would say,  
'You really ought to be ashamed  
To eat in such a way.'



One day when lunch was ready,  
And John came in from play,  
His mother said, 'A friend has come  
To eat with you today.'

'A friend of mine?' cried Johnny,  
'Whoever can it be?'  
'He's at the table,' mother said,  
'You'd better come and see.'

Into the dining room he ran,  
A little pig was there,  
It had a napkin round its neck,  
And sat up in a chair.

'This is your friend,' his father cried,  
'He's just a pig, it's true  
But he might really be your twin,  
He acts so much like you.'

'Indeed he's *not* my friend,' cried John,  
With red and angry face.  
'If he sits there beside my chair  
I'm going to change my place.'

'No, no,' his father quickly cried,  
'Indeed that will not do.  
Sit down at once where you belong,  
He's come to visit *you*.'

Now how ashamed was little John;  
But there he had to sit,  
And see the piggy served with food,  
And watch him gobble it.

'John,' said mamma, 'I think your friend  
Would like a piece of bread.'  
'And pass him the potatoes, too,'  
Papa politely said.

The other children laughed at this,  
But father shook his head.  
'Be still, or leave the room at once;  
It's not a joke,' he said.

'Oh mother, send the pig away,'  
With tears cried little John.  
'I'll never eat that way again,  
If only he'll be gone.'



'Why,' said mamma, 'since that's the case  
And you your ways will mend,  
Perhaps we'd better let him go.  
Perhaps he's not your friend.'

Now John has learned his lesson,  
For ever since that day  
He's lost his piggish manners,  
And eats the proper way.

And papa, and his mother too,  
Are both rejoiced to see  
How mannerly and how polite  
Their little John can be.

KATHERINE PYLE

### *Toucans Two*

Whatever one toucan can do  
is sooner done by toucans two  
and three toucans it's very true  
can do much more than two can do

and toucans numbering two plus two can  
manage more than all the zoo can  
in short there is no toucan who can  
do what four or three or two can.

JACK PRELUTSKY

### *The Old Man Who Lived in the Woods*

There was an old man who lived in the woods  
As you can plainly see,  
Who said he could do more work in a day,  
Than his wife could do in three.

'With all my heart,' the old woman said,  
'But then you must allow,  
That you must do my work for a day,  
And I'll go follow the plough.

'You must milk the tiny cow,  
Lest she should go quite dry,  
And you must feed the little pigs  
That live in yonder sty.

'You must watch the speckled hen,  
For fear she lays astray,  
And not forget the spool of yarn  
That I spin every day.'

The old woman took the staff in her hand,  
And went to follow the plough;  
And the old man took the pail on his head  
And went to milk the cow.

But Tiny she winked and Tiny she blinked,  
And Tiny she tossed her nose,  
And Tiny she gave him a kick on the shins  
Till the blood ran down his toes.

Then 'Whoa, Tiny!' and 'So, Tiny!  
My pretty little cow, stand still!  
If ever I milk you again,' he said,  
'It will be against my will.'

And then he went to feed the pigs  
That lived within the sty;  
The old sow ran against his legs  
And threw him in the mire.

And then he watched the speckled hen  
Lest she might lay astray;  
But he quite forgot the spool of yarn  
That his wife spun every day.



Then the old man swore by the sun and the moon,  
And the green leaves on the tree,  
That his wife could do more work in a day  
Than he could do in three.

And when he saw how well she ploughed,  
And ran the furrows even,  
He swore she could do more work in a day  
Than he could do in seven.

ANON.

## Teddy Bear



A bear, however hard he tries,  
Grows tubby without exercise.  
Our Teddy Bear is short and fat,  
Which is not to be wondered at;  
He gets what exercise he can  
By falling off the ottoman,  
But generally seems to lack  
The energy to clamber back.

Now tubbiness is just the thing  
Which gets a fellow wondering;  
And Teddy worried lots about  
The fact that he was rather stout.  
He thought: 'If only I were thin!  
But how does anyone begin?'  
He thought: 'It really isn't fair  
To grudge me exercise and air.'

For many weeks he pressed in vain  
His nose against the window-pane,  
And envied those who walked about  
Reducing their unwanted stout.  
None of the people he could see  
'Is quite' (he said) 'as fat as me!'  
Then with a still more moving sigh,  
'I mean' (he said) 'as fat as I!'

Now Teddy, as was only right,  
Slept in the ottoman at night,  
And with him crowded in as well  
More animals than I can tell;  
Not only these, but books and things,  
Such as a kind relation brings –  
Old tales of 'Once upon a time',  
And history retold in rhyme.

One night it happened that he took  
A peep at an old picture-book,  
Wherein he came across by chance  
The picture of a King of France  
(A stoutish man) and, down below,  
These words: 'King Louis So and So,  
Nicknamed "The Handsome!"' There he sat,  
*And (think of it) the man was fat!*

Our bear rejoiced like anything  
To read about this famous King,  
*Nicknamed 'The Handsome'.* There he sat,  
And certainly the man was fat.  
*Nicknamed 'The Handsome'.* Not a doubt  
The man was definitely stout.  
Why then, a bear (for all his tub)  
Might yet be named 'The Handsome Cub!'

'Might yet be named.' Or did he mean  
That years ago he 'might have been'?  
For now he felt a slight misgiving:  
'Is Louis So and So still living?  
Fashions in beauty have a way  
Of altering from day to day.  
Is "Handsome Louis" with us yet?  
Unfortunately I forgot.'

Next morning (nose to window-pane)  
The doubt occurred to him again.  
One question hammered in his head:  
'Is he alive or is he dead?'  
Thus, nose to pane, he pondered; but  
The lattice window, loosely shut,  
Swung open. With one startled 'Oh!'  
Our Teddy disappeared below.

There happened to be passing by  
A plump man with a twinkling eye,  
Who, seeing Teddy in the street,  
Raised him politely to his feet,  
And murmured kindly in his ear  
Soft words of comfort and of cheer:  
'Well, well!' 'Allow me!' 'Not at all.'  
'Tut-tut! A very nasty fall.'

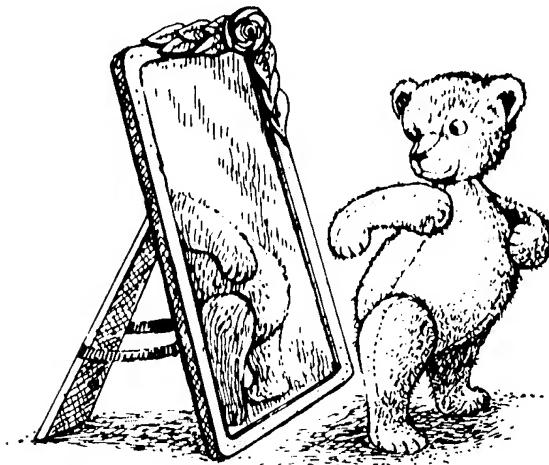
Our Teddy answered not a word;  
It's doubtful if he even heard.  
Our bear could only look and look:  
The stout man in the picture-book!  
That 'handsome' King – could this be he,  
This man of adiposity?  
'Impossible,' he thought. 'But still,  
No harm in asking. Yes, I will'

'Are you,' he said, 'by any chance  
His Majesty the King of France?'  
The other answered, 'I am that,'  
Bowed stiffly, and removed his hat;  
Then said, 'Excuse me,' with an air  
'But is it Mr Edward Bear?'  
And Teddy, bending very low,  
Replied politely, 'Even so!'

They stood beneath the window there,  
The King and Mr Edward Bear,  
And, handsome, if a trifle fat,  
Talked carelessly of this and that . . .  
Then said His Majesty, 'Well, well,  
I must get on,' and rang the bell.  
'Your bear, I think,' he smiled. 'Good-day!'  
And turned, and went upon his way.

A bear, however hard he tries,  
Grows tubby without exercise.  
Our Teddy Bear is short and fat,  
Which is not to be wondered at.  
But do you think it worries him  
To know that he is far from slim?  
No, just the other way about –  
He's *proud* of being short and stout.

A. A. MILNE



## *Dad and the Cat and the Tree*

'This morning a cat got  
Stuck in our tree.  
Dad said, 'Right, just  
Leave it to me.'

The tree was wobbly,  
The tree was tall.  
Mum said, 'For goodness'  
Sake don't fall!'

'Fall?' scoffed Dad,  
'A climber like me?  
Child's play, this!  
You wait and see.'

He got out the ladder  
From the garden shed.  
It slipped. He landed  
In the flower bed.

'Never mind,' said Dad,  
Brushing the dirt  
Off his hair and his face  
And his trousers and  
his shirt.

'We'll try Plan B. Stand  
Out of the way!'  
Mum said, 'Don't fall  
Again, O.K.?'

'Fall again?' said Dad.  
'Funny joke!'  
Then he swung himself up  
On a branch. It broke.

Dad landed *wallop*  
Back on the deck.  
Mum said, 'Stop it,  
You'll break your neck!'

'Rubbish!' said Dad.  
'Now we'll try Plan C.  
Easy as winking  
To a climber like me!'

Then he climbed up high  
On the garden wall  
Guess what?  
He *didn't fall!*

He gave a great leap  
And he landed flat  
In the crook of the  
tree-trunk –  
Right on the cat!

The cat gave a yell  
And sprang to the ground,  
Pleased as Punch to be  
Safe and sound.

So it's smiling and smirking,  
Smug as can be  
But poor old Dad's  
Still

Stuck  
Up  
The  
Tree!

KIT WRIGHT



## *A thousand hairy savages*

A thousand hairy savages  
Sitting down to lunch  
Gobble gobble glup glup  
Munch munch munch.

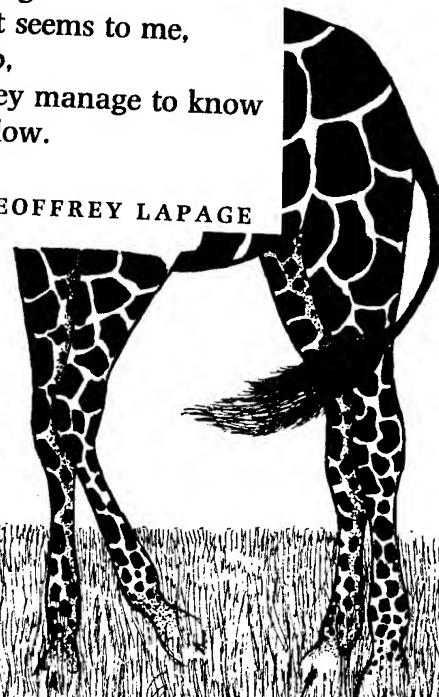
SPIKE MILLIGAN  
89



## THE IMPORTANCE OF ME

O Mister Giraffe, you make me laugh,  
You seem to be made all wrong;  
Your head is so high up there in the sky  
And your neck is so very long  
That your dinner and tea, it seems to me,  
Have such a long way to go,  
And I'm wondering how they manage to know  
The way to your tummy below.

GEOFFREY LAPAGE



## *Betty at the Party*

'When I was at the party,'  
Said Betty, aged just four,  
'A little girl fell off her chair  
    Right down upon the floor;  
And all the other little girls  
    Began to laugh, but me –  
I didn't laugh a single bit,'  
    Said Betty seriously.

'Why not?' her mother asked her,  
    Full of delight to find  
That Betty – bless her little heart! –  
    Had been so sweetly kind.  
'Why didn't you laugh, my darling?  
    Or don't you like to tell?'  
'I didn't laugh,' said Betty,  
    '"Cause me it was that fell.'

ANON.



## Miss T.

It's a very odd thing –  
 As odd can be –  
 That whatever Miss T. eats  
 Turns into Miss T.;  
 Porridge and apples,  
 Mince, muffins and mutton,  
 Jam, junket, jumbles –  
 Not a rap, not a button  
 It matters; the moment  
 They're out of her plate,  
 Though shared by Miss Butcher  
 And sour Mr Bate;  
 Tiny and cheerful,  
 And neat as can be,  
 Whatever Miss T. eats  
 Turns into Miss T.

WALTER DE LA MARE

## The Grasshopper and the Elephant

Way down south where bananas grow,  
 A grasshopper stepped on an elephant's toe.  
 The elephant said, with tears in his eyes,  
 'Pick on somebody your own size.'

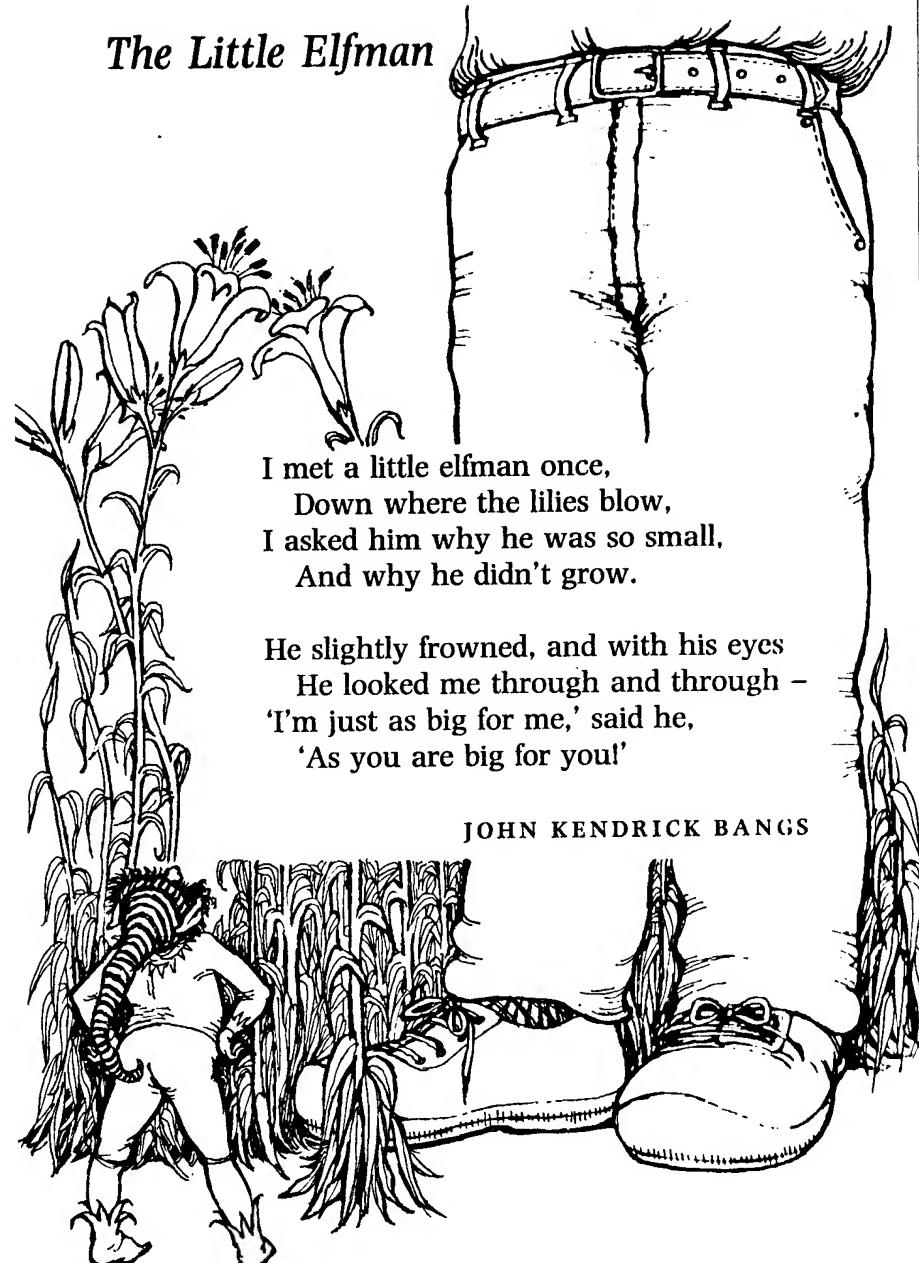
ANON.

## The Little Elfman

I met a little elfman once,  
 Down where the lilies blow,  
 I asked him why he was so small,  
 And why he didn't grow.

He slightly frowned, and with his eyes  
 He looked me through and through –  
 'I'm just as big for me,' said he,  
 'As you are big for you!'

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS



## *My Shadow*

I have a little shadow that goes in and out with me,  
And what can be the use of him is more than I can  
see.

He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head;  
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my  
bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to  
grow –

Not at all like proper children, which is always very  
slow;  
For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india-rubber  
ball,  
And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of  
him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,  
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.  
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can  
see;

I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow sticks  
to me!

One morning, very early, before the sun was up,  
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup;  
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepyhead,  
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep in  
bed.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON  
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## *By the Klondike River*

*(Spoken by a boy of seven)*

Last night, by the Klondike River,  
I dug up a fortune in gold!  
But I caught a chill in my liver,  
Brought on by the bitter cold!

It was far too late to push on,  
So I placed the sack on my head;  
But gold makes a very hard cushion,  
And ice makes a very cold bed.

So I stared at the stars above me,  
As my freezing body lay;  
And thought of the folk who loved me,  
A thousand miles away.

The voice of my dear old mother  
Seemed to cry from the icy rocks:  
'I told you to wear another  
Woolly, and extra socks!'

My body is stiff. I shall die here,  
In this lonely Klondike ditch;  
And all I can think as I lie here,  
Is: Why did I want to be rich?

There's a block of ice on my tummy,  
And my frozen toes have curled.  
Oh, I'd much rather have my mummy  
Than all the gold in the world!

ALAN CORRN

## *Letty's Globe*

When Letty had scarce passed her third glad year,  
And her young artless words began to flow,  
One day we gave the child a colour'd sphere  
Of the wide earth, that she might mark and know,  
By tint and outline, all its sea and land.  
She patted all the world; old empires peep'd  
Between her baby fingers; her soft hand  
Was welcome at all frontiers. How she leap'd  
And laugh'd and prattled in her world-wide bliss;  
But when we turn'd her sweet unlearned eye  
On our own isle, she raised a joyous cry –  
'Oh! yes, I see it, Letty's home is there!'  
And while she hid all England with a kiss,  
Bright over Europe fell her golden hair.

CHARLES TENNYSON TURNER



## *In the Mirror*

In the mirror  
On the wall,  
There's a face  
I always see;  
Round and pink,  
And rather small,  
Looking back again  
At me.

It is very  
Rude to stare,  
But she never  
Thinks of that,  
For her eyes are  
Always there;  
What can she be  
Looking at?

ELIZABETH FLEMING



## *The house I go to in my dream*

The house I go to in my dream  
stands beside a little stream  
full of dab and minnow and  
trout I try to catch by hand  
but every single fish is  
more elusive than my wishes.

For every time I wish, you see,  
I wish that someone else was me.  
I stand and wish and call up spells  
to turn me into something else  
but no matter how I try  
I finish up remaining I,  
however hard I wish to be  
someone else, I am still me.

And so I think that I and you  
and every other person, too,  
must really be a sort of fish  
not to be caught just with a wish.

## IF YOU SHOULD MEET ... BEWARE ...

GEORGE BARKER



## *Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee*

Ho, for the Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee!  
He was as wicked as wicked could be,  
But oh, he was perfectly gorgeous to see!  
The Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

His conscience, of course, was black as a bat,  
But he had a floppety plume on his hat  
And when he went walking it jiggled – like that!  
The plume of the Pirate Dowdee.

His coat it was crimson and cut with a slash,  
And often as ever he twirled his moustache  
Deep down in the ocean the mermaids went splash,  
Because of Don Durk of Dowdee.

Moreover, Dowdee had a purple tattoo,  
And stuck in his belt where he buckled it through  
Were a dagger, a dirk and a squizzamaroo  
For fierce was the Pirate Dowdee.

So fearful he was he would shoot at a puff,  
And always at sea when the weather grew rough  
He drank from a bottle and wrote on his cuff,  
Did Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

Oh, he had a cutlass that swung at his thigh  
And he had a parrot called Pepperkin Pyc,  
And a zigzaggy scar at the end of his eye  
Had Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

He kept in a cavern, this buccaneer bold,  
A curious chest that was covered with mould,  
And all of his pockets were jingly with gold!  
    Oh, jing! went the gold of Dowdee.

His conscience, of course, was crook'd like a squash.  
But both of his boots made a slickery slosh,  
And he went through the world with a wonderful  
    swash,  
    Did Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

It's true he was wicked as wicked could be,  
His sins they outnumbered a hundred and three,  
But oh, he was perfectly gorgeous to see,  
    The Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

MILDRED MEIGS

### *Grizzly Bear*

If you ever, ever, ever meet a grizzly bear,  
You must never, never, never ask him *where*  
He is going.  
Or *what* he is doing;  
For if you ever, ever, dare  
To stop a grizzly bear,  
You will never meet *another* grizzly bear.

MARY AUSTIN

### *If you should meet a crocodile . . .*

If you should meet a crocodile,  
    Don't take a stick and poke him;  
Ignore the welcome in his smile,  
    Be careful not to stroke him.  
For as he sleeps upon the Nile,  
    He thinner gets and thinner;  
And whene'er you meet a crocodile  
    He's ready for his dinner.

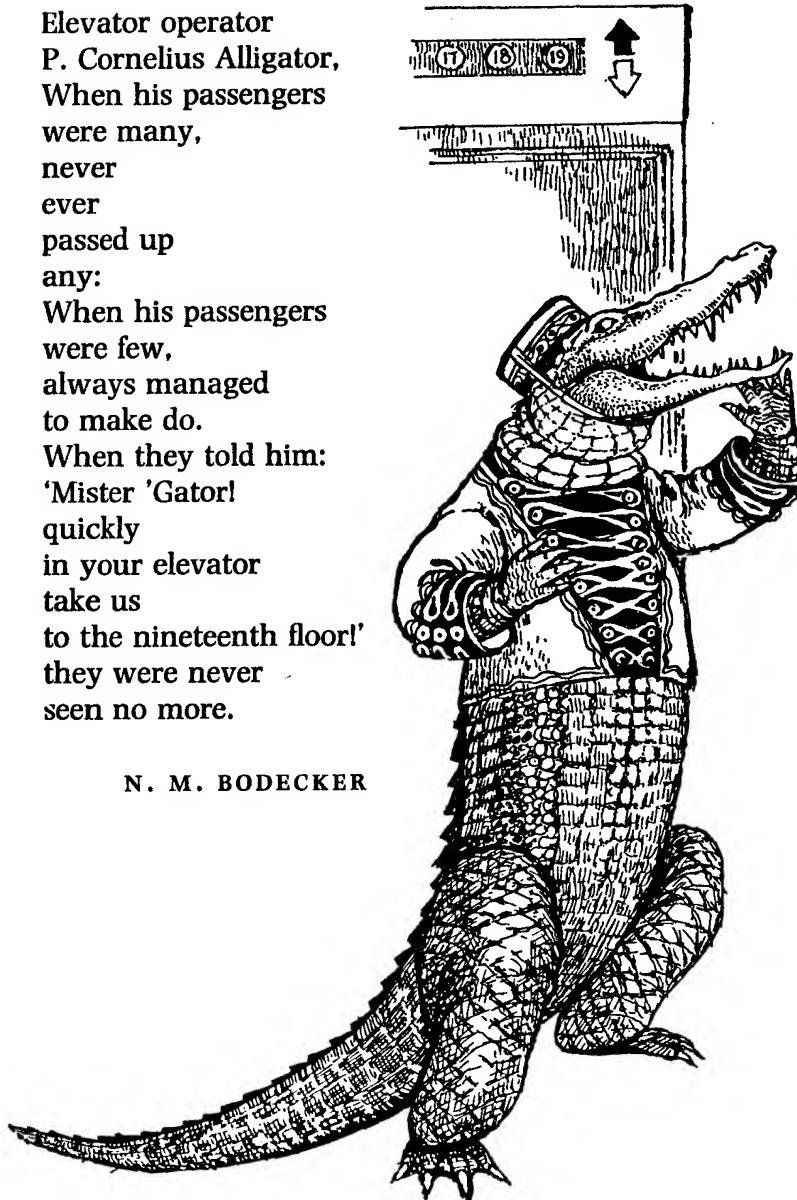
ANON.



## Mr 'Gator

Elevator operator  
P. Cornelius Alligator,  
When his passengers  
were many,  
never  
ever  
passed up  
any:  
When his passengers  
were few,  
always managed  
to make do.  
When they told him:  
'Mister 'Gator!  
quickly  
in your elevator  
take us  
to the nineteenth floor!'  
they were never  
seen no more.

N. M. BODECKER

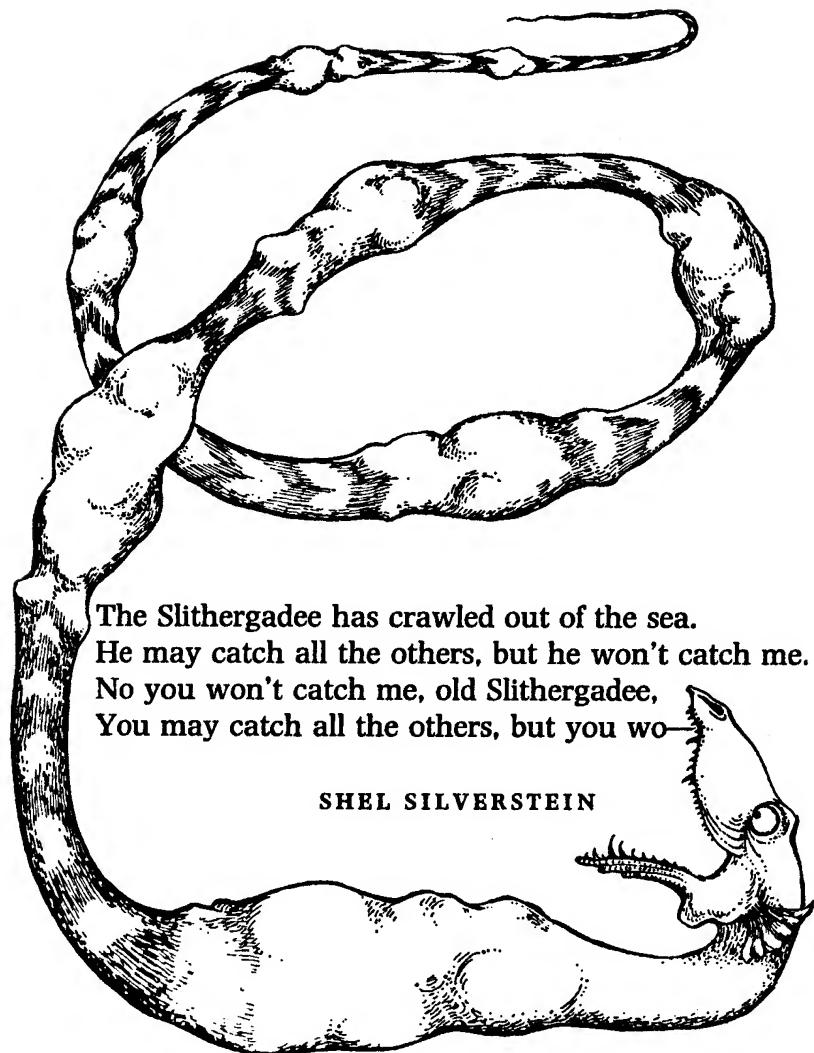


## *The Spider and the Fly*

'Will you walk into my parlour?'  
Said the Spider to the Fly;  
"Tis the prettiest little parlour  
That ever you did spy;  
The way into my parlour  
Is up a winding stair,  
And I have many curious things  
To show when you are there.'  
'Oh, no, no,' said the little Fly;  
'To ask me is in vain;  
For who goes up your winding stair  
Can ne'er come down again.'  
'I'm sure you must be weary, dear,  
With soaring up so high;  
Will you rest upon my little bed?'  
Said the Spider to the Fly.  
There are pretty curtains drawn around;  
The sheets are fine and thin;  
And if you like to rest awhile,  
I'll snugly tuck you in'  
'Oh, no, no,' said the little Fly;  
'For I've often heard it said,  
They never, never wake again  
Who sleep upon your bed!'

MARY HOWITT

## *The Slithergadee*



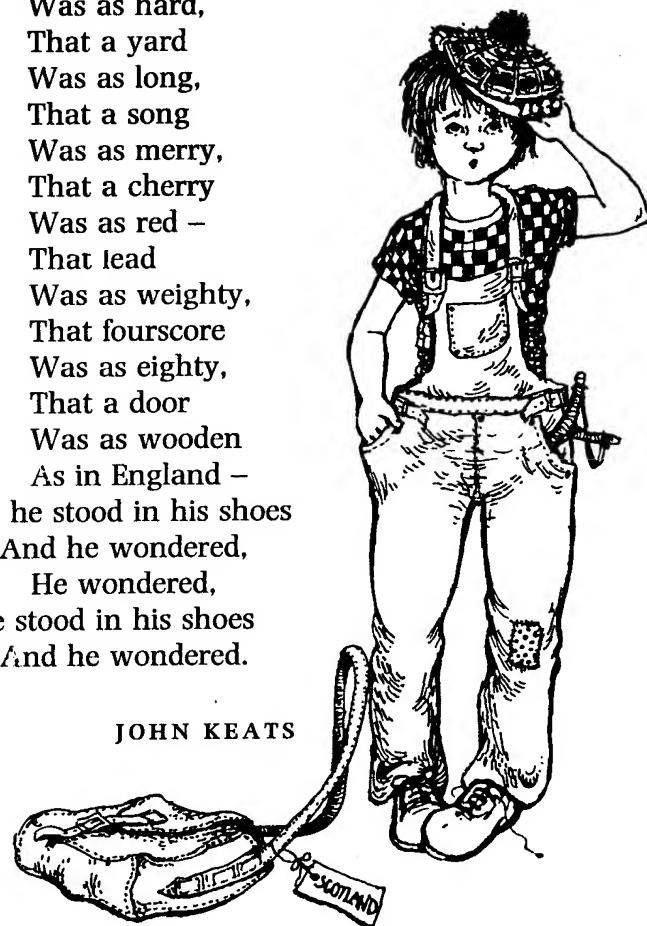
The Slithergadee has crawled out of the sea.  
He may catch all the others, but he won't catch me.  
No you won't catch me, old Slithergadee,  
You may catch all the others, but you wo—

SHEL SILVERSTEIN

ISN'T IT MYSTERIOUS?

## *There was a naughty Boy*

... There was a naughty Boy,  
And a naughty Boy was he,  
He ran away to Scotland  
The people for to see –  
There he found  
That the ground  
Was as hard,  
That a yard  
Was as long,  
That a song  
Was as merry,  
That a cherry  
Was as red –  
That lead  
Was as weighty,  
That fourscore  
Was as eighty,  
That a door  
Was as wooden  
As in England –  
So he stood in his shoes  
And he wondered,  
He wondered,  
He stood in his shoes  
And he wondered.



JOHN KEATS

## *Danny Murphy*

He was as old as old could be,  
His little eye could scarcely see,  
His mouth was sunken in between  
His nose and chin, and he was lean  
And twisted up and withered quite,  
So that he couldn't walk aright.

His pipe was always going out,  
And then he'd have to search about  
In all his pockets, and he'd mow  
— O, deary me! and musha now! —  
And then he'd light his pipe, and then  
He'd let it go clean out again.

He couldn't dance or jump or run,  
Or ever have a bit of fun  
Like me and Susan, when we shout  
And jump and throw ourselves about:  
— But when he laughed, then you could see  
He was as young as young could be!

JAMES STEPHENS

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## *My Puppy*

It's funny  
my puppy  
knows just how I feel.

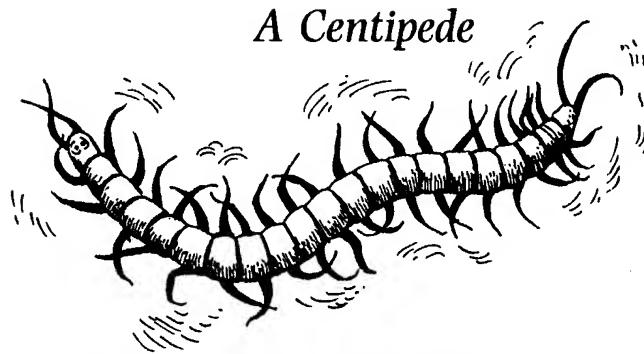
When I'm happy  
he's yappy  
and squirms like an eel.

When I'm grumpy  
he's slumpy  
and stays at my heel.

It's funny  
my puppy  
knows such a great deal.

AILEEN FISHER

## *A Centipede*



A centipede was happy quite,  
Until a frog in fun  
Said, 'Pray, which leg comes after which?'  
This raised her mind to such a pitch,  
She lay distracted in a ditch  
Considering how to run.

ANON.

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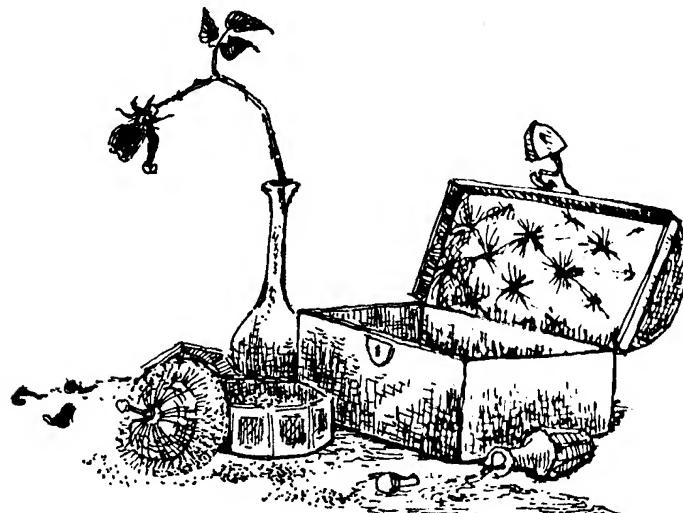
## Macavity: The Mystery Cat

Macavity's a Mystery Cat: he's called the Hidden Paw –  
For he's the master criminal who can defy the Law.  
He's the bafflement of Scotland Yard, the Flying  
Squad's despair:  
For when they reach the scene of crime – *Macavity's not there!*

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,  
He's broken every human law, he breaks the law of  
gravity.  
His powers of levitation would make a fakir stare,  
And when you reach the scene of crime, *Macavity's not there!*  
You may seek him in the basement, you may look up  
in the air –  
But I tell you once and once again, Macavity's not  
there!

Macavity's a ginger cat, he's very tall and thin;  
You would know him if you saw him, for his eyes are  
sunken in.  
His brow is deeply lined with thought, his head is  
highly domed;  
His coat is dusty from neglect, his whiskers are  
uncombed.  
He sways his head from side to side, with movements  
like a snake;  
And when you think he's fast asleep, he's always wide  
awake.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,  
For he's a fiend in feline shape, a monster of depravity.  
You may meet him in a by-street, you may meet him  
in the square –  
But when a crime's discovered, then *Macavity's not there!*  
He's outwardly respectable. (They say he cheats at  
cards.)  
And his footprints are not found in any file of Scotland  
Yard's.  
And when the larder's looted, or the jewel-case is  
rifled,  
Or when the milk is missing, or another Peke's been  
stifled –  
Or the greenhouse glass is broken and the trellis past  
repair –  
Ay, there's the wonder of the thing! *Macavity's not there!*



And when the Foreign Office find a Treaty's gone  
astray,  
Or the Admiralty lose some plans and drawings by the  
way,  
There may be a scrap of paper in the hall or on the  
stair –  
But it's useless to investigate – *Macavity's not there!*

And when the loss has been disclosed, the Secret  
Service say:  
'It must have been Macavity!' – but he's a mile away.  
You'll be sure to find him resting, or a-licking of his  
thumbs,  
Or engaged in doing complicated long division sums.

Macavity, Macavity, there's no one like Macavity,  
There never was a Cat of such deceitfulness and  
suavity.  
He always has an alibi, and one or two to spare:  
At whatever time the deed took place – **MACAVITY  
WASN'T THERE!**  
And they say that all the cats whose wicked deeds are  
widely known  
(I might mention Mungojerrie, I might mention  
Griddlebone)  
Are nothing more than agents for the Cat who all the  
time  
Just controls their operations: the Napoleon of Crime!

T. S. ELIOT

## *The Shadow*

When the last of gloaming's gone,  
When the world is drowned in Night,  
Then swims up the great round Moon,  
Washing with her borrowed light  
Twig, stone, grass-blade – pin-point bright –  
Every tiniest thing in sight.

Then on tiptoe,  
Off go I!  
To a white-washed  
Wall near by.

Where, for secret  
Company,  
My small shadow  
Waits for me.

Still and stark,  
Or stirring – *so*,  
All I'm doing  
He'll do too.

Quieter than  
A cat he mocks  
My walk, my gestures,  
Clothes and locks.

I twist and turn,  
I creep, I prowl,  
Likewise does he,  
The crafty soul,  
The Moon for lamp,  
And for music, owl.

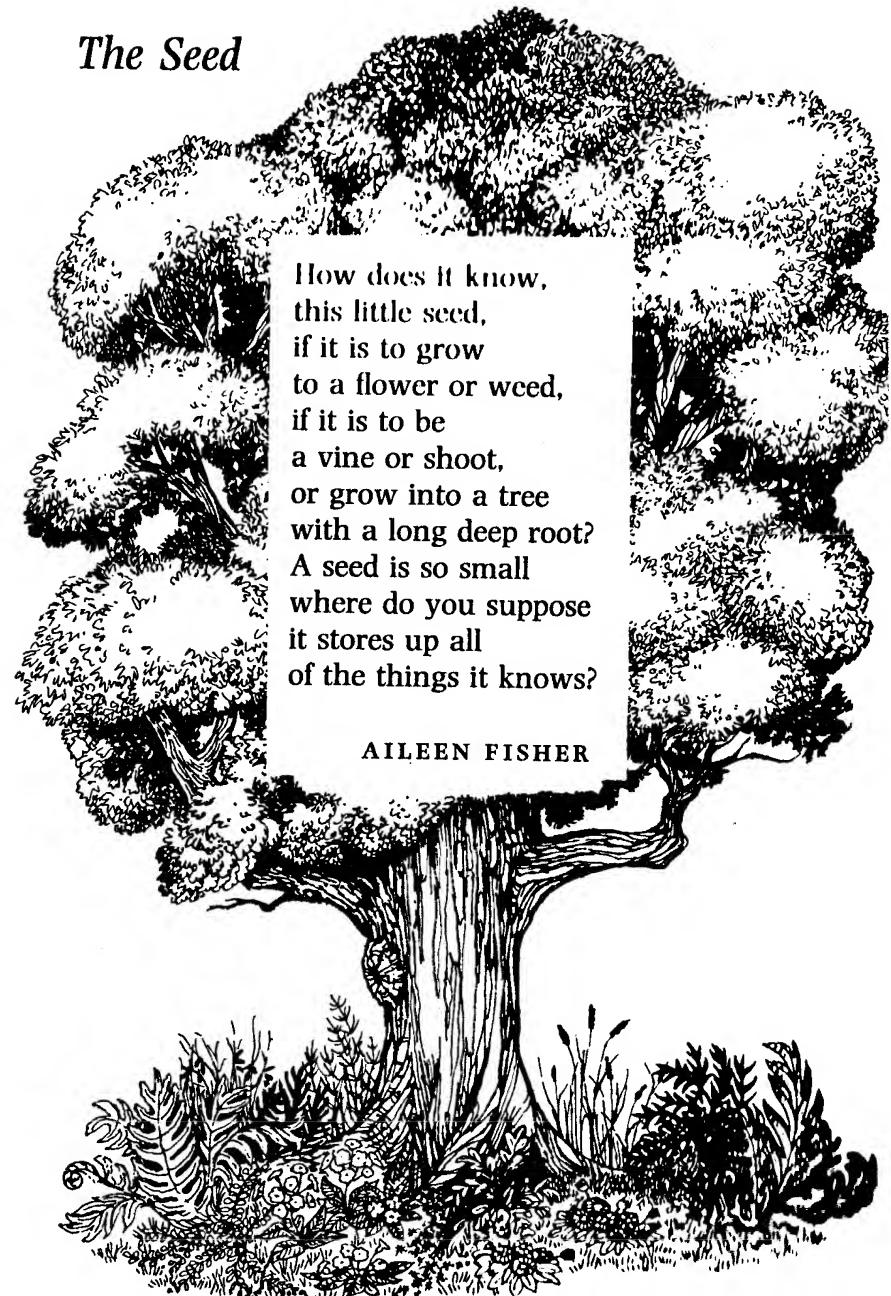
'Sst' I whisper,  
'Shadow, come!'  
No answer:  
He is blind and dumb –  
Blind and dumb –  
And when I go,  
The wall will stand empty,  
White as snow.

WALTER DE LA MARE

### *The Seed*

How does it know,  
this little seed,  
if it is to grow  
to a flower or weed,  
if it is to be  
a vine or shoot,  
or grow into a tree  
with a long deep root?  
A seed is so small  
where do you suppose  
it stores up all  
of the things it knows?

AILEEN FISHER



### *I met a man*

As I was going up the stair  
I met a man who wasn't there.  
He wasn't there again today –  
Oh! how I wish he'd go away!

ANON.



## Colonel Fazackerley

Colonel Fazackerley Butterworth-Toast  
Bought an old castle complete with a ghost,  
But someone or other forgot to declare  
To Colonel Fazack that the spectre was there.

On the very first evening, while waiting to dine,  
The Colonel was taking a fine sherry wine,  
When the ghost, with a furious flash and a flare,  
Shot out of the chimney and shivered, 'Beware!'

Colonel Fazackerley put down his glass  
And said, 'My dear fellow, that's really first class!  
I just can't conceive how you do it at all.  
I imagine you're going to a Fancy Dress Ball?'

At this, the dread ghost gave a withering cry.  
Said the Colonel (his monocle firm in his eye),  
'Now just how you do it I wish I could think.  
Do sit down and tell me, and please have a drink.'

The ghost in his phosphorous cloak gave a roar  
And floated about between ceiling and floor.  
He walked through a wall and returned through a  
pane  
And backed up the chimney and came down again.

Said the Colonel, 'With laughter I'm feeling quite  
weak!'  
(As trickles of merriment ran down his cheek).  
'My house-warming party I hope you won't spurn.  
You *must* say you'll come and you'll give us a turn!'

At this, the poor spectre – quite out of his wits –  
Proceeded to shake himself almost to bits.  
He rattled his chains and he clattered his bones  
And he filled the whole castle with mumbles and  
moans.

But Colonel Fazackerley, just as before,  
Was simply delighted and called out, 'Encore!'  
At which the ghost vanished, his efforts in vain,  
And never was seen at the castle again.

'Oh dear, what a pity!' said Colonel Fazack.  
'I don't know his name, so I can't call him back.'  
And then with a smile that was hard to define,  
Colonel Fazackerley went in to dine.

CHARLES CAUSLEY



### *If all the seas . . .*

If all the seas were one sea,  
What a great sea that would be!  
If all the trees were one tree,  
What a great tree that would be!  
And if all the axes were one axe,  
What a great axe that would be!  
And if all the men were one man  
What a great man that would be!  
And if that great man took the great axe  
And cut down that great tree,  
And let it fall into the great sea,  
What a splish-splash that would be!

ANON.

### TICKLE YOUR FANCY

### *Sweet Dreams*

I wonder as into bed I creep  
What it feels like to fall asleep.  
I've told myself stories, I've counted sheep,  
But I'm always asleep when I fall asleep.  
Tonight my eyes I will open keep,  
And I'll stay awake till I fall asleep,  
Then I'll know what it feels like to fall asleep,  
Asleep,  
Asleep,  
Asleep . . .

OGDEN NASH

## *My Uncle Paul of Pimlico*

My Uncle Paul of Pimlico  
Has seven cats as white as snow,  
Who sit at his enormous feet  
And watch him, as a special treat,  
Play the piano upside down,  
In his delightful dressing-gown;  
The firelights leaps, the parlour glows,  
And, while the music ebbs and flows,  
They smile (while purring the refrains),  
At little thoughts that cross their brains.

MERVYN PEAKE



### *The Tickle Rhyme*

'Who's that tickling my back?'  
said the wall.  
'Me,' said a small  
Caterpillar. 'I'm learning  
To crawl.'

IAN SERRAILLIER

### *There was an old man from Peru*

There was an old man from Peru  
Who dreamed he was eating his shoe.  
He woke in a fright  
In the middle of the night  
And found it was perfectly true.

ANON.

### *I eat my peas with honey*

I eat my peas with honey,  
I've done it all my life,  
It makes the peas taste funny,  
But it keeps them on my knife.

ANON.

### *The Habits of the Hippopotamus*

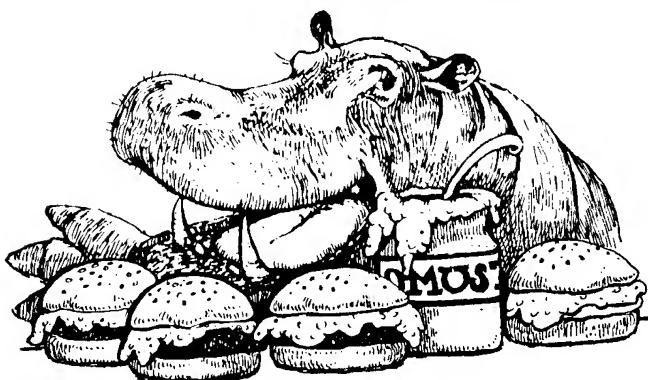
The hippopotamus is strong  
And huge of head and broad of bustle;  
The limbs on which he rolls along  
Are big with hippopotomuscle.

He does not greatly care for sweets  
Like ice cream, apple pie or custard,  
But takes to flavour what he eats  
A little hippopotomustard.

The hippopotamus is true  
To all his principles, and just;  
He always tries his best to do  
The things one hippopotomust.

He never rides in trucks or trams,  
In taxicabs or omnibuses,  
And so keeps out of traffic jams  
And other hippopotomusses.

ARTHUR GUITERMAN



## *The Quangle Wangle's Hat*

On the top of the Crumpetty Tree  
The Quangle Wangle sat,  
But his face you could not see,  
On account of his Beaver Hat.  
For his Hat was a hundred and two feet wide,  
With ribbons and bibbons on every side  
And bells, and buttons, and loops, and lace,  
So that nobody ever could see the face  
Of the Quangle Wangle Quee.

The Quangle Wangle said  
To himself on the Crumpetty Tree:  
'Jam; and jelly; and bread;  
Are the best of food for me!  
But the longer I live on this Crumpetty Tree,  
The plainer than ever it seems to me  
That very few people come this way,  
And that life on the whole is far from gay!'  
Said the Quangle Wangle Quee.

But there came to the Crumpetty Tree,  
Mr and Mrs Canary;  
And they said: 'Did you ever see  
Any spot so charmingly airy?  
May we build a nest on your lovely Hat?  
Mr Quangle Wangle, grant us that!  
O please let us come and build a nest  
Of whatever material suits you best,  
Mr Quangle Wangle Quee!'

And besides, to the Crumpetty Tree  
Came the Stork, the Duck, and the Owl;  
The Snail, and the Bumble-Bee,  
The Frog, and the Fimble Fowl;  
(The Fimble Fowl, with a Corkscrew leg;)  
And all of them said: 'We humbly beg,  
We may build our homes on your lovely Hat:  
Mr Quangle Wangle, grant us that!  
Mr Quangle Wangle Quee!'



And the Golden Grouse came there,  
And the Pobble who has no toes,  
And the small Olympian bear,  
And the Dong with a luminous nose.  
And the Blue Baboon, who played the flute,  
And the Orient Calf from the Land of Tute,  
And the Attery Squash, and the Bisky Bat,  
All came and built on the lovely Hat  
Of the Quangle Wangle Quee.

And the Quangle Wangle said  
To himself on the Crumpetty Tree:  
'When all these creatures move  
    What a wonderful noise there'll be!'  
And at night by the light of the Mulberry moon  
They danced to the Flute of the Blue Baboon,  
On the broad green leaves of the Crumpetty Tree,  
And all were as happy as happy could be,  
    With the Quangle Wangle Quee.

EDWARD LEAR

### *Custard the Dragon*

Belinda lived in a little white house,  
With a little black kitten and a little grey mouse,  
And a little yellow dog and a little red wagon,  
And a realio, trulio, little pet dragon.

Now the name of the little black kitten was Ink,  
And the little grey mouse, she called her Blink,  
And the little yellow dog was sharp as Mustard,  
But the dragon was a coward, and she called him  
    Custard.

Belinda was as brave as a barrelful of bears,  
And Ink and Blink chased lions down the stairs,  
Mustard was as brave as a tiger in a rage,  
But Custard cried for a nice safe cage.

Custard the dragon had big sharp teeth,  
And spikes on top and scales underneath,  
Mouth like a fireplace, a chimney for a nose,  
And realio, trulio daggers on his toes.

Belinda tickled him, she tickled him unmerciful,  
Ink, Blink and Mustard, they rudely called him  
    Percival,  
They all sat laughing in the little red wagon  
At the realio, trulio, cowardly dragon.

Belinda giggled till she shook the house,  
And Blink said *Weeek!* which is giggling for a mouse,  
Ink and Mustard rudely asked his age,  
When Custard called for a nice safe cage.

Suddenly, suddenly they heard a nasty sound,  
And Mustard growled, and they looked all around,  
Meowch! cried Ink, and Ooh! cried Belinda,  
For there was a pirate, climbing in the winda.

Pistol in his left hand, pistol in his right,  
And he held in his teeth a cutlass bright;  
His beard was black, one leg was wood.  
It was clear that the pirate meant no good.



Belinda paled, and she cried Help! Help!  
But Mustard fled with a terrible yelp,  
Ink trickled down to the bottom of the household,  
And little mouse Blink strategically mouseholed.

But up jumped Custard, snorting like an engine,  
Clashed his tail like irons in a dungeon,  
With a clatter and a clank and a jangling squirm  
He went at the pirate like a robin at a worm.

The pirate gaped at Belinda's dragon,  
And gulped some grog from his pocket flagon,  
He fired two bullets, but they didn't hit,  
And Custard gobbled him, every bit.

Belinda embraced him, Mustard licked him;  
No one mourned for his pirate victim.  
Ink and Blink in glee did gyrate  
Around the dragon that ate the pyrate.



Belinda still lives in her little white house,  
With her little black kitten and her little grey mouse,  
And her little yellow dog and her little red wagon,  
And her realio, trulio, little pet dragon.

Belinda is as brave as a barrelful of bears,  
And Ink and Blink chase lions down the stairs,  
Mustard is as brave as a tiger in a rage,  
But Custard keeps crying for a nice safe cage.

OGDEN NASH



There once was a man of Bengal  
Who was asked to a fancy dress ball;  
He murmured: 'I'll risk it  
and go as a biscuit . . .'  
But a dog ate him up in the hall.

ANON.

### *There was a young lady of Crete*

There was a young lady of Crete,  
Who was so exceedingly neat,  
When she got out of bed  
She stood on her head,  
To make sure of not soiling her feet.

ANON.

### *There was an old Man with a beard*

There was an old Man with a beard,  
Who said, 'It is just as I feared! –  
Two Owls and a Hen, four Larks and a Wren  
Have all built their nests in my beard!'

EDWARD LEAR

## *The Funny Old Man and His Wife*



Once upon a time, in a little wee house,  
Lived a funny old man and his wife;  
And he said something funny to make her laugh,  
Every day of his life.

One day he said such a funny thing,  
That she shook and screamed with laughter;  
But the poor old soul, she couldn't leave off  
For at least three whole days after.

So laughing with all her might and main,  
Three days and nights she sat;  
And at the end she didn't know a bit  
What she'd been laughing at.

ANON.

## *The Ceremonial Band*

*(To be said out loud by a chorus and solo voices)*

The old King of Dorchester,  
He had a little orchestra,  
And never did you hear such a ceremonial band.  
'Tootle-too,' said the flute,  
'Deed-a-reedle,' said the fiddle,  
For the fiddles and the flutes were the finest in the  
land.

The old King of Dorchester  
He had a little orchestra,  
And never did you hear such a ceremonial band.  
'Pump-a-rum,' said the drum,  
'Tootle-too,' said the flute,  
'Deed-a-reedle,' said the fiddle,  
For the fiddles and the flutes were the finest in the  
land.

The old King of Dorchester,  
He had a little orchestra,  
And never did you hear such a ceremonial band.  
'Pickle-pee,' said the fife,  
'Pump-a-rum,' said the drum,  
'Tootle-too,' said the flute,  
'Deed-a-reedle,' said the fiddle,  
For the fiddles and the flutes were the finest in the  
land.

The old King of Dorchester,  
He had a little orchestra,  
And never did you hear such a ceremonial band.  
'Zoomba-zoom,' said the bass,  
'Pickle-pee,' said the fife,  
'Pump-a-rum,' said the drum,  
'Tootle-too,' said the flute,  
'Deed-a-reedle,' said the fiddle,  
For the fiddles and the flutes were the finest in the  
land.

The old King of Dorchester,  
He had a little orchestra,  
And never did you hear such a ceremonial band.  
'Pah-pa-rah,' said the trumpet,



'Zoomba-zoom,' said the bass,  
'Pickle-pee,' said the fife,  
'Pump-a-rum,' said the drum,  
'Tootle-too,' said the flute,  
'Deed-a-reedle,' said the fiddle,  
For the fiddles and the flutes were the finest in the  
land,  
Oh! the fiddles and the flutes were the finest in the  
land.

JAMES REEVES

## *I saw a jolly hunter*

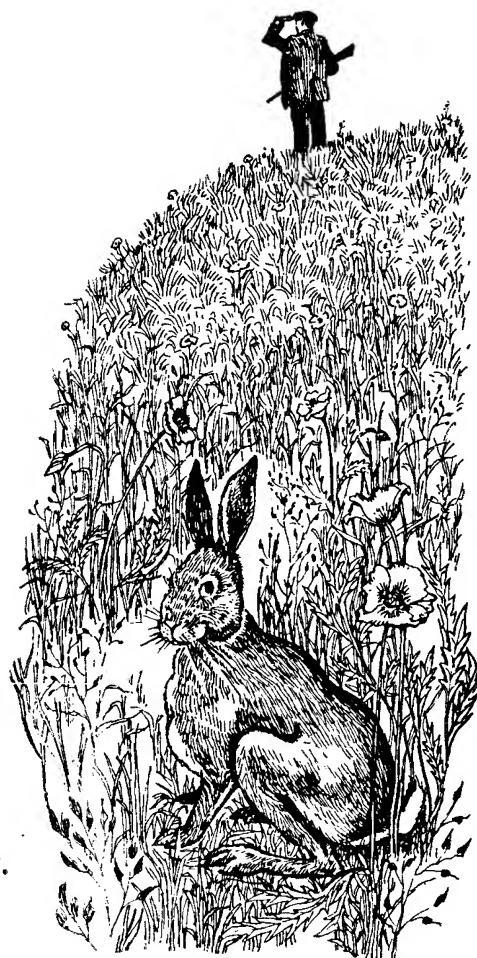
I saw a jolly hunter  
With a jolly gun  
Walking in the country  
In the jolly sun.

In the jolly meadow  
Sat a jolly hare.  
Saw the jolly hunter.  
Took jolly care.

Hunter jolly eager –  
Sight of jolly prey.  
Forgot gun pointing  
Wrong jolly way.

Jolly hunter jolly head  
Over heels gone.  
Jolly old safety-catch  
Not jolly on.

Bang went the jolly gun.  
Hunter jolly dead.  
Jolly hare got clean away.  
Jolly good, I said.



CHARLES CAUSLEY

## *The Goat*

There was a man, now please take note,  
There was a man, who had a goat,  
He lov'd that goat, indeed he did,  
He lov'd that goat, just like a kid.

One day that goat felt frisk and fine,  
Ate three red shirts from off the line.  
The man he grabbed him by the back,  
And tied him to a railroad track.

But when the train hove into sight,  
That goat grew pale and green with fright.  
He heaved a sigh, as if in pain,  
Coughed up those shirts and flagged the train.

ANON.

## *The Mad Gardener's Song*

... He thought he saw a Buffalo  
Upon the chimney-piece:  
He looked again, and found it was  
His Sister's Husband's Niece.  
'Unless you leave this house,' he said,  
'I'll send for the Police!'

He thought he saw a Rattlesnake  
That questioned him in Greek:  
He looked again, and found it was  
The Middle of Next Week.  
'The one thing I regret,' he said,  
'Is that it cannot speak!'

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk  
Descending from the bus:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Hippopotamus.  
'If this should stay to dine,' he said,  
'There won't be much for us!'

He thought he saw a Kangaroo  
That worked a coffee-mill:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Vegetable-Pill.  
'Were I to swallow this,' he said,  
'I should be very ill!'

He thought he saw a Coach-and-Four  
That stood beside his bed:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Bear without a Head.  
'Poor thing,' he said, 'poor silly thing!  
It's waiting to be fed!'

He thought he saw an Albatross  
That fluttered round the lamp:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Penny Postage-Stamp.  
'You'd best be getting home,' he said,  
'The nights are very damp!'

He thought he saw a Garden-Door  
That opened with a key:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Double Rule of Three.  
'And all its mystery,' he said,  
'Is clear as day to me!'

LEWIS CARROLL



## *Eletelephony*

Once there was an elephant,  
Who tried to use the telephant –  
No! No! I mean an elephone  
Who tried to use the telephone –  
(Dear me! I am not certain quite  
That even now I've got it right.)

Howe'er it was, he got his trunk  
Entangled in the telephunk;  
The more he tried to get it free,  
The louder buzzed the telephree –  
(I fear I'd better drop the song  
Of elephop and telephong!)

LAURA E. RICHARDS

## *The Elephant*

The elephant carries a great big trunk;  
He never packs it with clothes;  
It has no lock and it has no key,  
But he takes it wherever he goes.

ANON.

## *Adventures of Isabel*

Isabel met an enormous bear;  
Isabel, Isabel, didn't care.  
The bear was hungry, the bear was ravenous,  
The bear's big mouth was cruel and cavernous.  
The bear said, Isabel, glad to meet you,  
How do, Isabel, now I'll eat you!  
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry;  
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.  
She washed her hands and she straightened her hair  
up,  
Then Isabel quietly ate the bear up.



Once on a night as black as pitch  
Isabel met a wicked old witch.  
The witch's face was cross and wrinkled,  
The witch's gums with teeth were sprinkled.  
Ho, ho, Isabel, the old witch crowed,  
I'll turn you into an ugly toad!  
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry;  
Isabel didn't scream or scurry,  
She showed no rage and she showed no rancour,  
But she turned the witch into milk and drank her.



Isabel met a hideous giant,  
Isabel continued self-reliant.  
The giant was hairy, the giant was horrid,  
He had one eye in the middle of his forehead.  
Good morning, Isabel, the giant said,  
I'll grind your bones to make my bread.  
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry;  
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.  
She nibbled the zwieback that she always fed off,  
And when it was gone, she cut the giant's head off.

Isabel met a troublesome doctor  
He punched and poked till he really shocked her.  
The doctor's talk was of coughs and chills,  
And the doctor's satchel bulged with pills.  
The doctor said unto Isabel,  
Swallow this, it will make you well.  
Isabel, Isabel, didn't worry;  
Isabel didn't scream or scurry.  
She took those pills from the pill-concoctor,  
And Isabel calmly cured the doctor.

OGDEN NASH



## *If Pigs Could Fly*

If pigs could fly, I'd fly a pig  
To foreign countries small and big –  
    To Italy and Spain,  
To Austria, where cowbells ring,  
To Germany, where people sing –  
    And then come home again.

I'd see the Ganges and the Nile;  
I'd visit Madagascar's isle,  
    And Persia and Peru.  
People would say they'd never seen  
So odd, so strange an air-machine  
    As that on which I flew.

Why, everyone would raise a shout  
To see his trotters and his snout  
    Come floating from the sky;  
And I would be a famous star  
Well known in countries near and far –  
    If only pigs could fly!

## PIPER, PIPE THAT SONG AGAIN

JAMES REEVES

## *Piping down the valleys wild*

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:

‘Pipe a song about a Lamb!’  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
‘Piper, pipe that song again;’  
So I piped: he wept to hear.

‘Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer;’  
So I sang the same again,  
While he wept with joy to hear.

‘Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book, that all may read.’  
So he vanished from my sight,  
And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stained the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear.

WILLIAM BLAKE

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